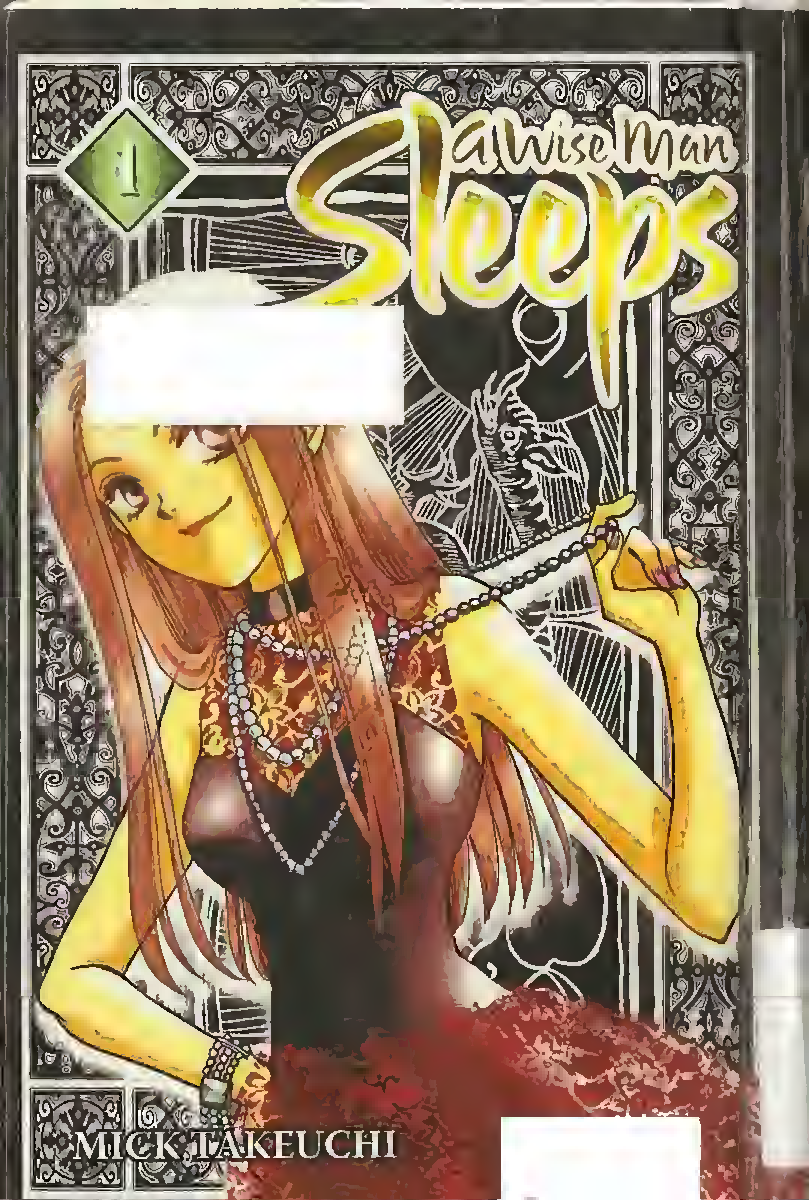

1
a Wise Man
Sleeps
MICK TAKEUCHI

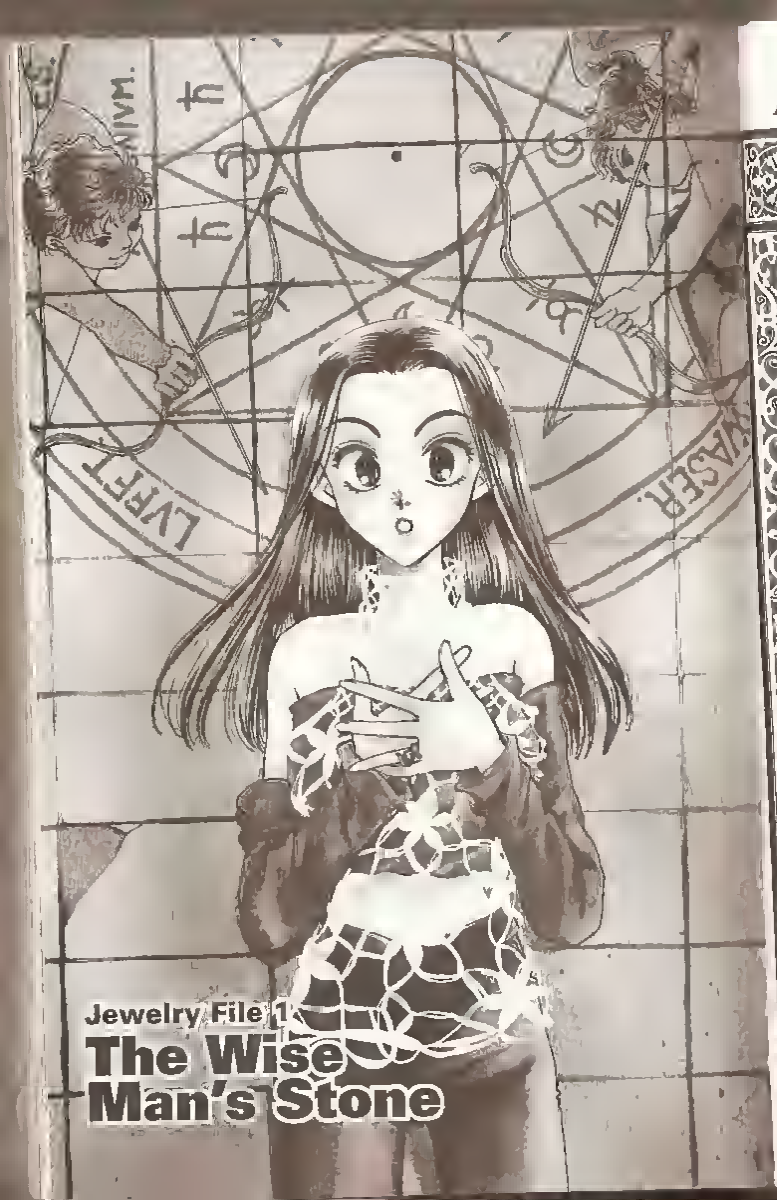
a Wise Man Sleeps

STORY AND ART BY

MICK TAKEUCHI

VOLUME 1

go!comi



A WISE MAN SLEEPS 1

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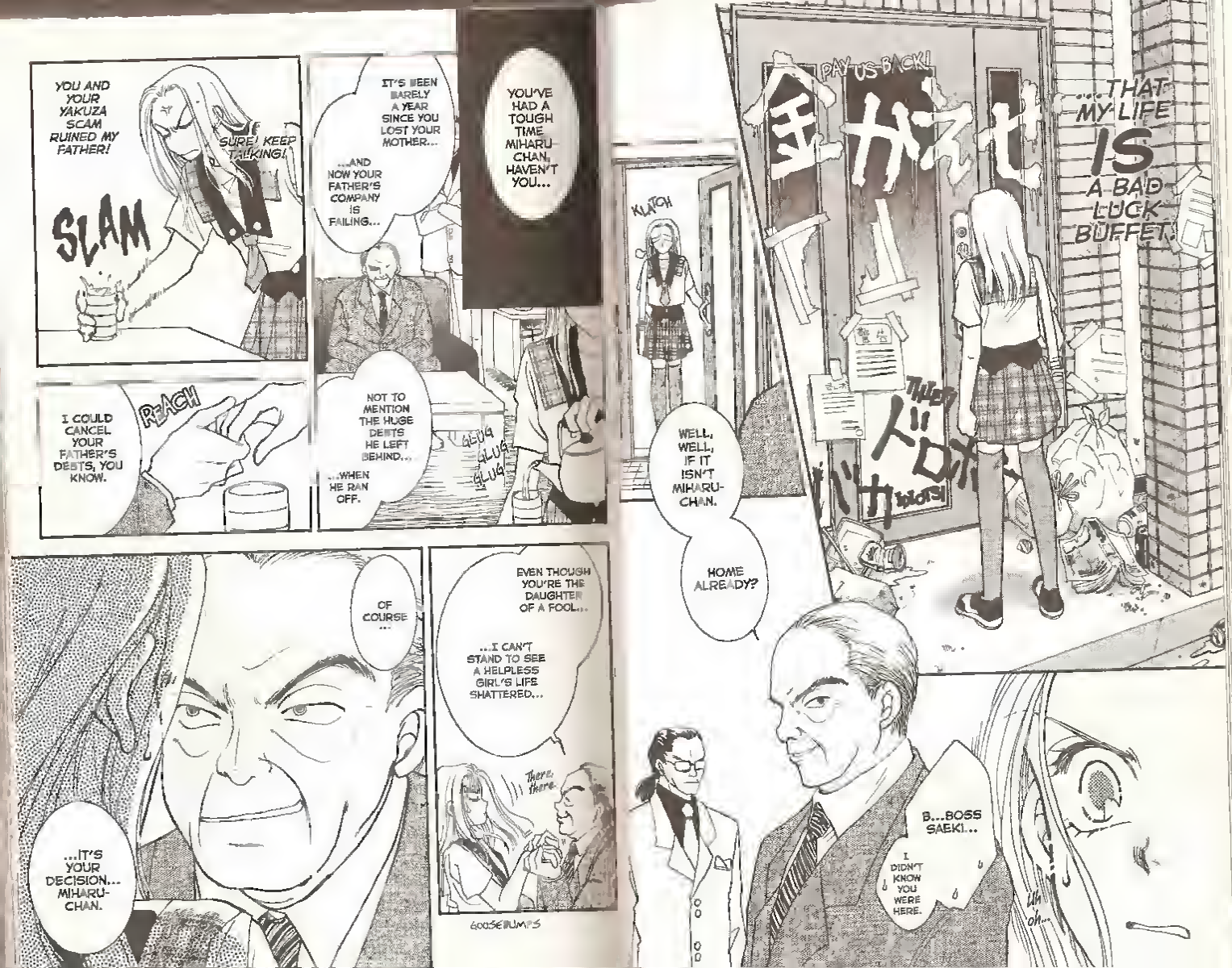
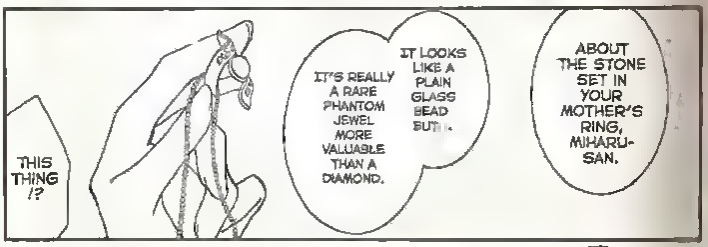
Jewelry Mystery File

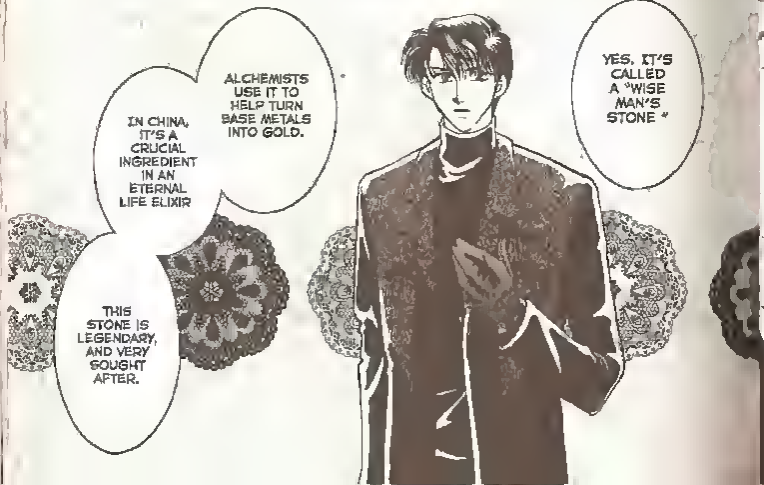
HOW... RUUUDE!!
EEK!!
SMACK
GRAB
YOUR... RING...
STRUT
STRUT
STRUT
STRUT
Not that he looks real lucky, either!
I'M NOT UNLUCKY JUST BECAUSE SOME STRANGE CREEP SAYS I AM!
BUT, IT'S TRUE...
CREAK
WHAT DID HE MEAN, A CURSED JEWEL!?
I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE THAT SOME ROCK CAN CONTROL MY DESTINY?
...A RING.
!
WHY'S HE ONLY WEARING ONE GLOVE!?
WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY? HE'S DRESSED IN BLACK FROM HEAD TO TOE.
And he's talking to himself...
He some kind of street medium?
AAH... I SEE IT, NOW.
THE SOURCE OF YOUR MIS-FORTUNE IS...
H... HOW COULD HE KNOW THAT ...?
THE RING YOUR LATE MOTHER LEFT YOU!
THAT'S RIGHT.
POINT
WH.. WHAT WAS HE TRYING TO DO?
SOB SOB SOB
WHOA!
TRIP
IF YOU DON'T GET RID OF IT NOW, YOUR LUCK WILL GET EVEN WOR-
LISTEN TO ME.
THE STONE IN THAT RING IS A CURSED JEWEL, FEARED ALL OVER THE WORLD...
CLICK
CLICK


YOU AND YOUR YAKUZA SCAM RUINED MY FATHER!
SURE! KEEP TALKING!
SLAM
IT'S BEEN BARELY A YEAR SINCE YOU LOST YOUR MOTHER...
...AND NOW YOUR FATHER'S COMPANY IS FAILING...
YOU'VE HAD A TOUGH TIME MIHARU-CHAN, HAVEN'T YOU...
I COULD CANCEL YOUR FATHER'S DEBTS, YOU KNOW.
REACH
NOT TO MENTION THE HUGE DEBTS HE LEFT BEHIND...
...WHEN HE RAN OFF.
GLUG GLUG GLUG
PAY US BACK!
金かえせ
...THAT MY LIFE IS A BAD LUCK BUFFET.
KLATCH
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T MIHARU-CHAN.
HOME ALREADY?
OF COURSE ...
...IT'S YOUR DECISION... MIHARU-CHAN.
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE THE DAUGHTER OF A FOOL...
...I CAN'T STAND TO SEE A HELPLESS GIRL'S LIFE SHATTERED...
There, there.
GOOSEBUMPS
B...BOSS SAEKI...
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE HERE.
Uh oh...

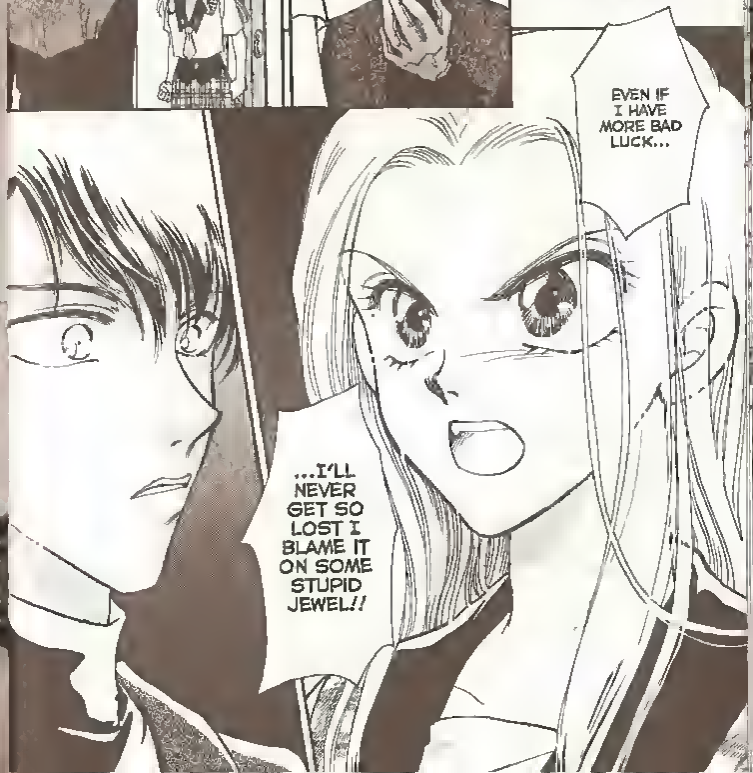
IT CAN'T BE...
CAN THIS STONE REALLY BE CURSED?
...CAN IT?
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...THIS BAD LUCK STARTED...
...WHEN MY FATHER BOUGHT THIS RING... OR SO IT FEELS...
CLINK
BUT STILL, I COULD WORK MY WHOLE LIFE AND NEVER GET CLOSE TO PAYING THESE DEBTS.
I JUST CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.
NOOO!!
Come on!
Come here, little girl!
WHO'D WANT YOUR HELP!?
DON'T WORRY.
I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU...
GLOOM
SEEE? WASN'T I RIIIIGHT?
DING
AAAAAH!!

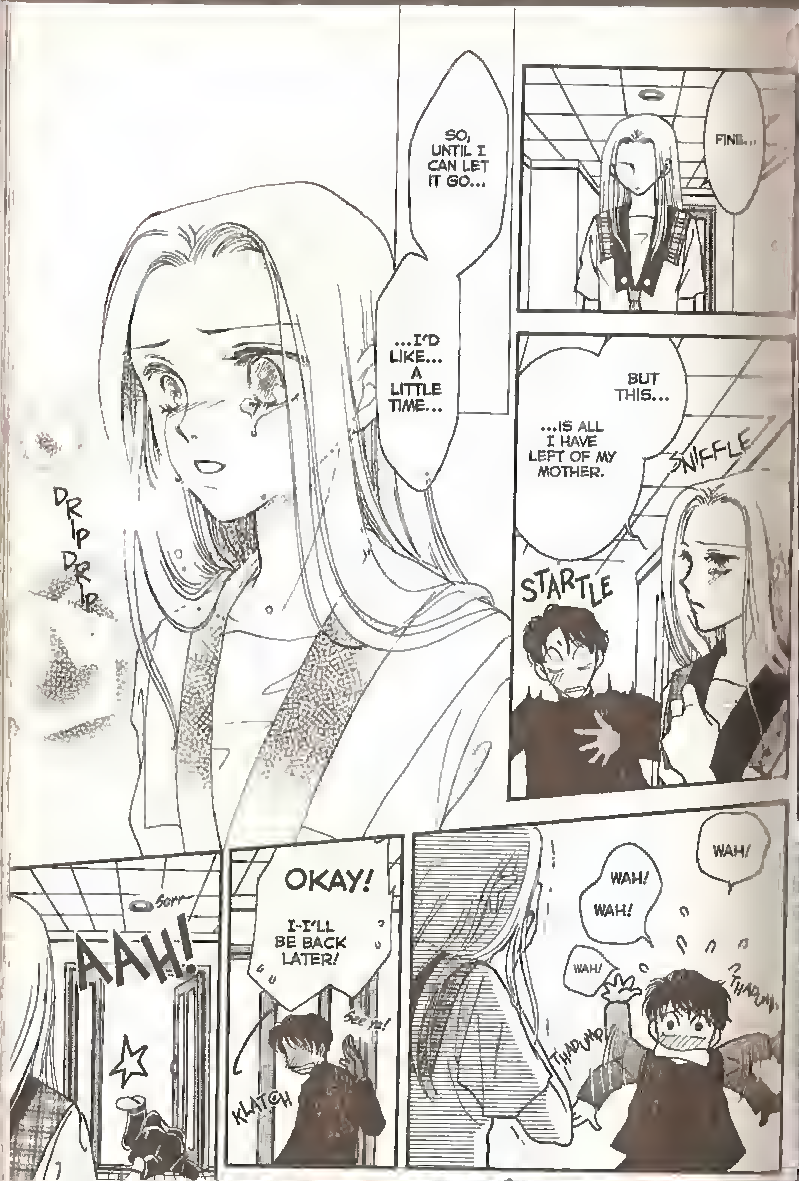
I GUESS... YOU COULD CALL ME A JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES FOR JEWELS.
WORLD JEWEL PRESERVERS. I TRACK DOWN AND SOLVE DISPUTES OVER GEMSTONES.
W... P...?
World Pro-wrestling...?
ACTUALLY... I SPECIALIZE IN THIS SORT OF THING
WP Investigator 謎太郎 明智 Rintaro Akechi
I WAS SURE THAT ONCE YOU KNEW IT WAS CURSED, YOU'D HAND IT OVER.
BUT, YOU LEAVE ME NO CHOICE.
Le sigh.
Rummage


THIS THING!?
IT'S REALLY A RARE PHANTOM JEWEL MORE VALUABLE THAN A DIAMOND.
IT LOOKS LIKE A PLAIN GLASS BEAD BUT...
ABOUT THE STONE SET IN YOUR MOTHER'S RING, MIHARU-SAN.


IN CHINA, IT'S A CRUCIAL INGREDIENT IN AN ETERNAL LIFE ELIXIR
ALCHEMISTS USE IT TO HELP TURN BASE METALS INTO GOLD.
YES. IT'S CALLED A "WISE MAN'S STONE."
THIS STONE IS LEGENDARY, AND VERY SOUGHT AFTER.

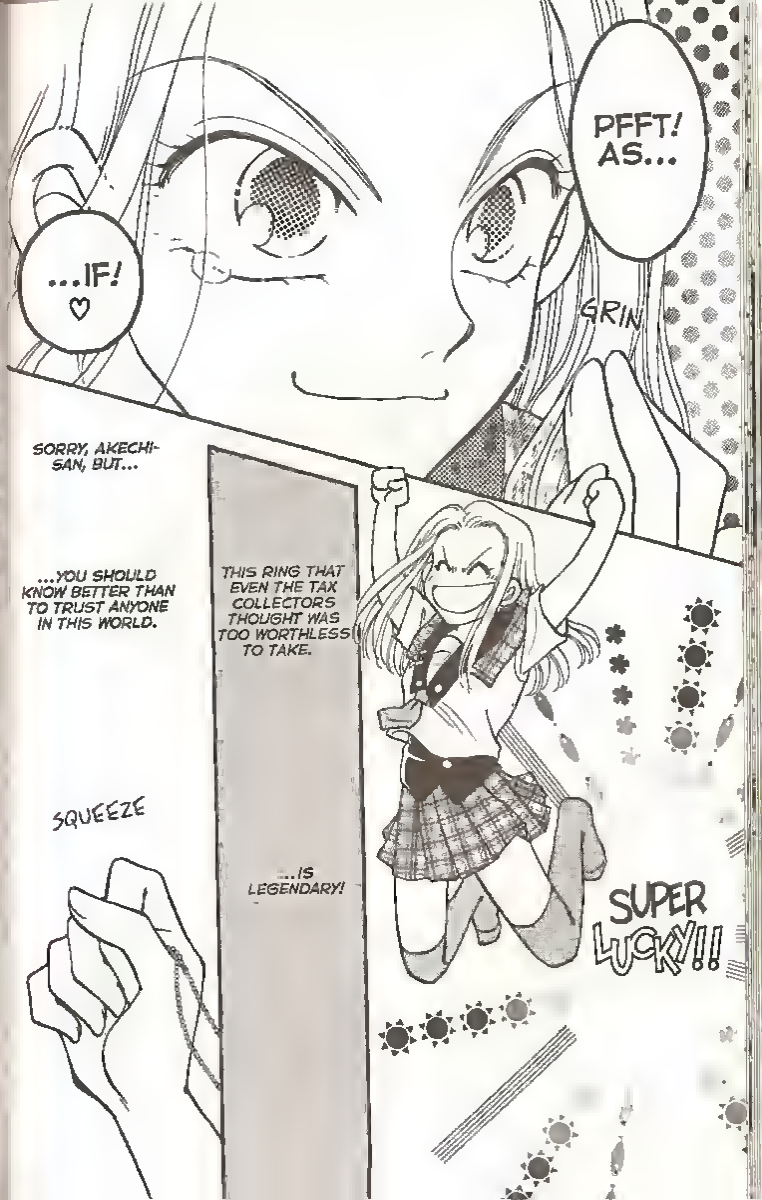
AND MY DAD'S COMPANY WENT UNDER BECAUSE HE WAS TOO SOFT!
MY MOM DIED BECAUSE SHE WAS REALLY SICK.
DON'T THINK I'M STUPID!
IF YOU WANT YOUR LUCK TO CHANGE, GET RID OF THE RING. YOU CAN GIVE IT TO ME...
No good?
ALL OF YOUR BAD LUCK IS CAUSED BY THIS RING.
W... When'd you get in here?
THUMP
THUMP

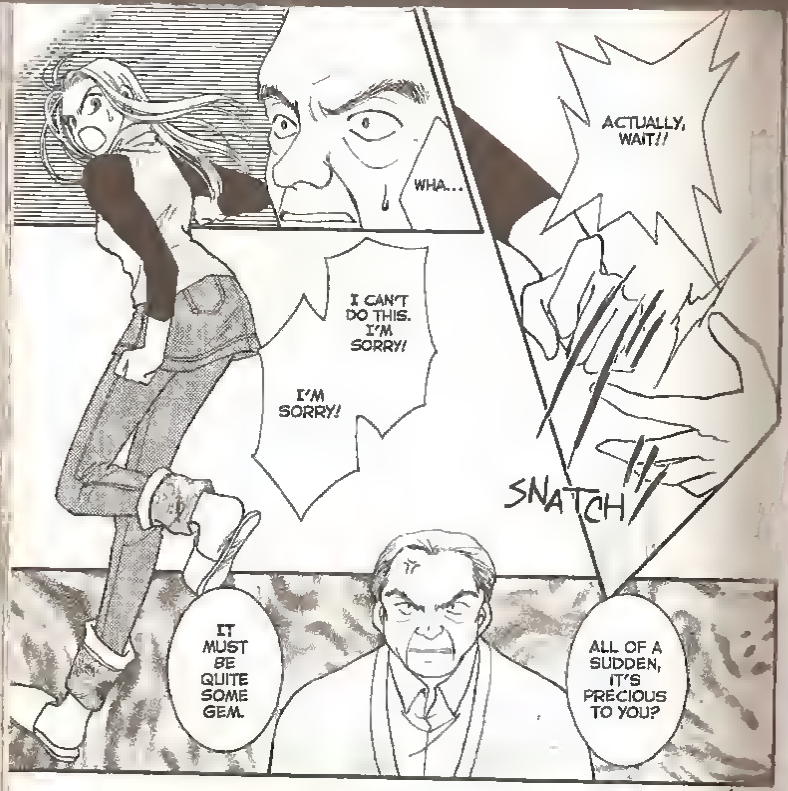

EVEN IF I HAVE MORE BAD LUCK...
...I'LL NEVER GET SO LOST I BLAME IT ON SOME STUPID JEWEL!!


SO, UNTIL I CAN LET IT GO...
...I'D LIKE... A LITTLE TIME...
DRIP DRIP
FINE...
BUT THIS...
...IS ALL I HAVE LEFT OF MY MOTHER.
SNIFFLE
STARTLE
AAH!
Sorry
OKAY!
I-I'LL BE BACK LATER!
See ya!
KLATCH
WAH!
WAH!
WAH!
WAH!
THUDUMP
THUDUMP

.....
Hush...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THIS!?
Please don't tell on meee!
ALCHEMY ...?
WHAT KIND OF MORON ARE YOU!?
UM...
UH... W-WELL, YOU SEE...
SO?
SO, THAT RING BELONGS TO MY ORGANIZATION.
IT WAS STOLEN FROM US SEVERAL YEARS AGO.
THEN IT SURFED THE BLACK MARKET UNTIL YOUR FATHER BOUGHT IT, MIHARU-SAN
IS IT THAT VALUABLE TO YOU?
Please stop glaring at meee!
YOU WANT ME TO GIVE BACK THE RING?
W-WELL IT IS A WORLD WONDER...
UH... WELL, IT WOULD BE NICE OF YOU...

THE WP, EH...?
I HAVE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT THEM...
YOU HAVE TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF!!
LOOKING AT IT, THE STONE IS THE STRANGEST COLOR, ISN'T IT?
WHAT AN ODD COLOR.
Score!
THIS WILL COMPLETELY CLEAR MY DEBTS!
I CAN'T COMMIT WITHOUT AN EXPERT APPRAISAL, BUT
...IF HIS CLAIMS ARE TRUE, I WILL BUY IT FROM YOU.

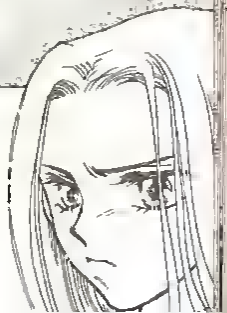

...IF! ♡
PFFT! AS...
GRIN
SORRY, AKECHI-SAN, BUT...
...YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO TRUST ANYONE IN THIS WORLD.
SQUEEZE
THIS RING THAT EVEN THE TAX COLLECTORS THOUGHT WAS TOO WORTHLESS TO TAKE...
...IS LEGENDARY!
SUPER LUCKY!!



HE SAID IT WAS BECAUSE WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG HE WAS TOO POOR TO BUY HER ANYTHING.

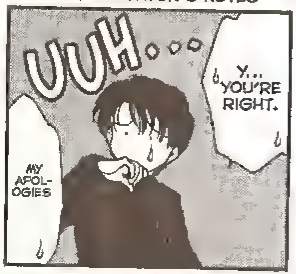
... MY DAD WOULD ALWAYS BUY HER JEWELRY.

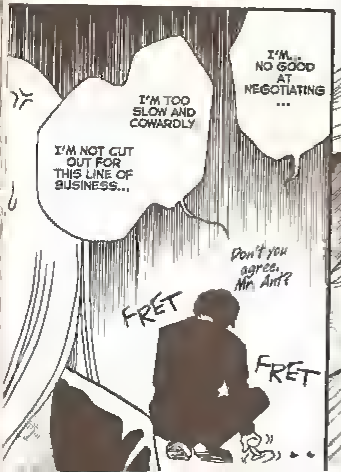
TO CHEER UP MY MOM WHEN SHE WAS SICK...

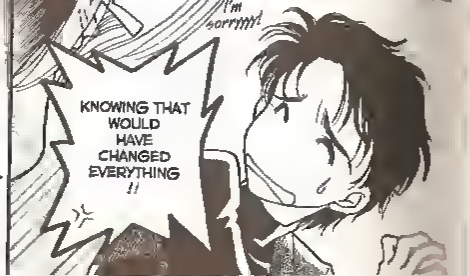


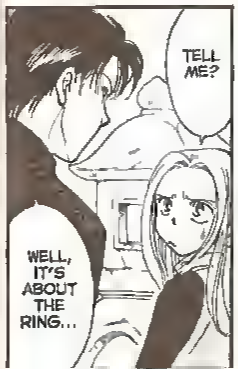
SALESMAN SMILE
MY ORGANIZATION WILL PAY AS MUCH AS SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLION* FOR IT.
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO JUST HAND IT OVER.
WE'LL PAY WHATEVER PRICE YOU WANT.

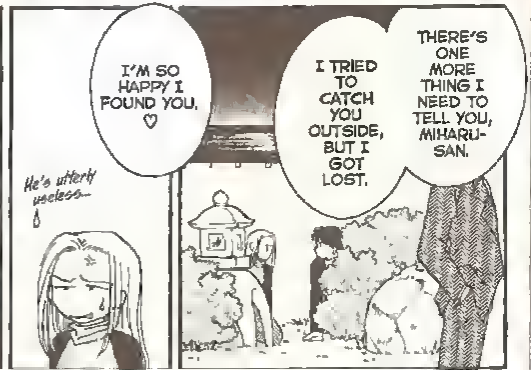
*SEE TRANSLATOR'S NOTES





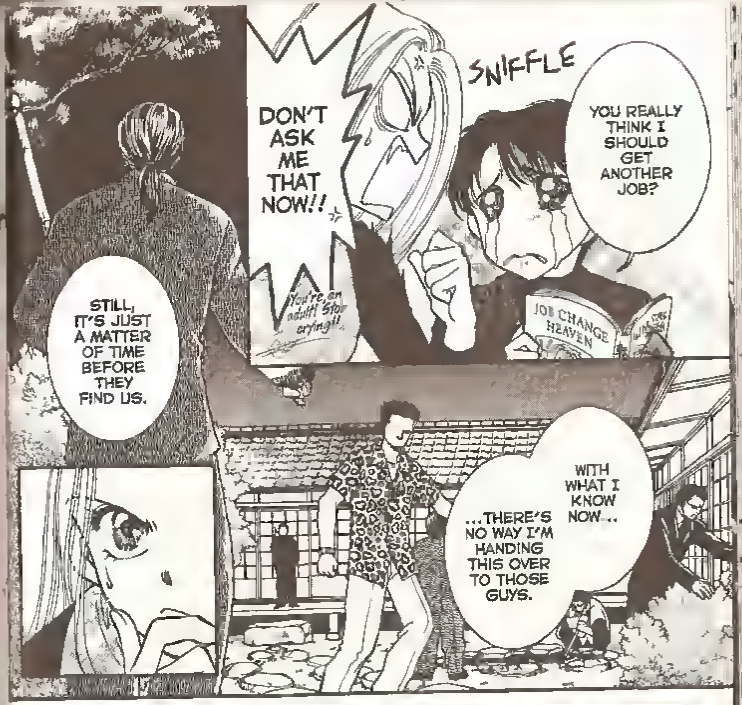


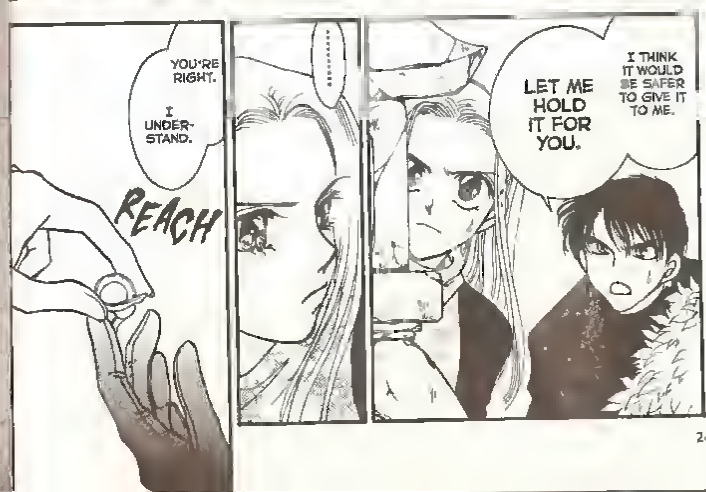


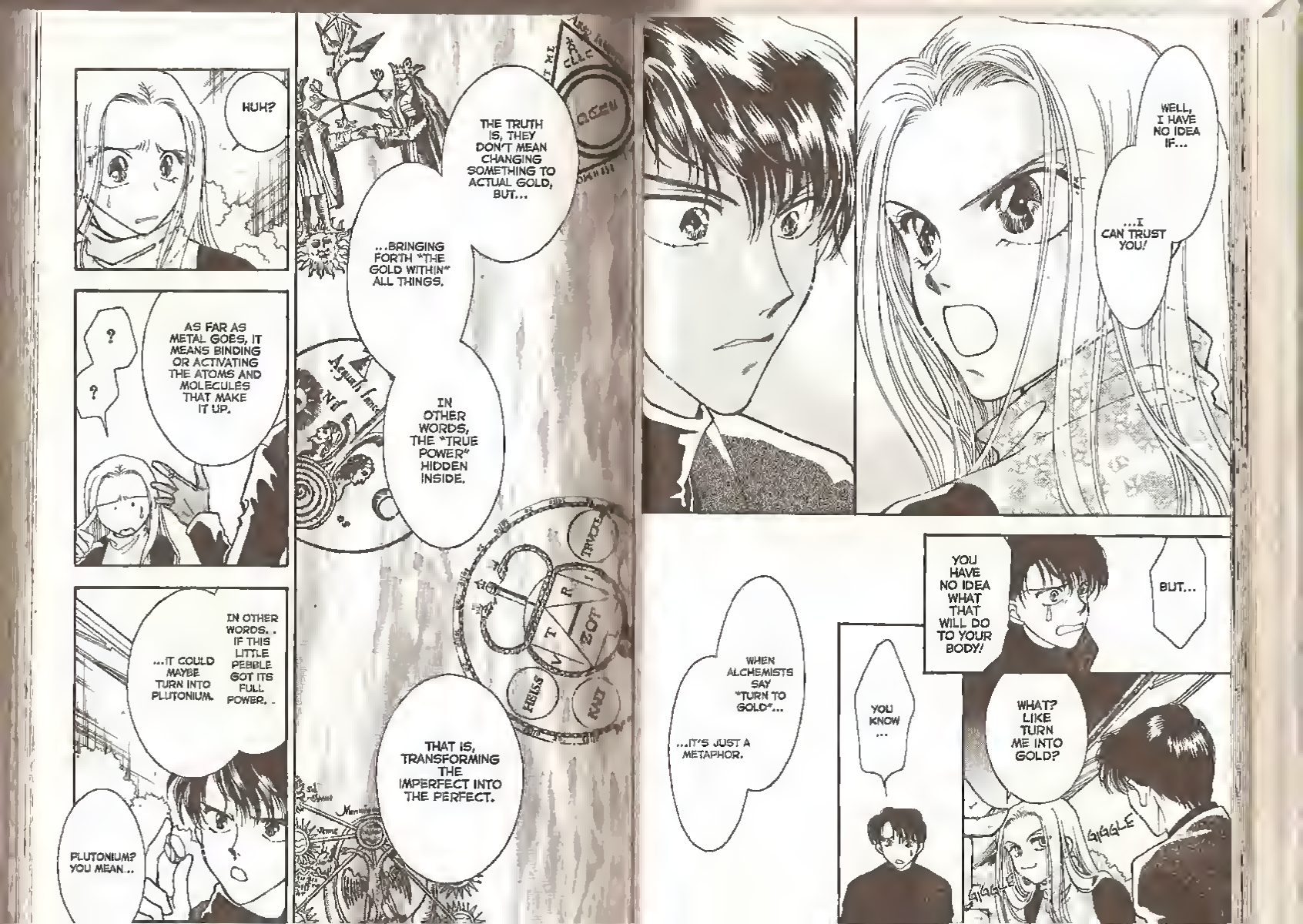

I'M SO HAPPY I FOUND YOU, ♡
He's utterly useless...
I TRIED TO CATCH YOU OUTSIDE, BUT I GOT LOST.
THERE'S ONE MORE THING I NEED TO TELL YOU, MIHARU-SAN.

AAAAAAH!!
YOINK
MMPH!
GULP

DAZE
Y-YOU SWAL-LOWED IT..
WISE MAN'S STONE...
THE W...
W-W...

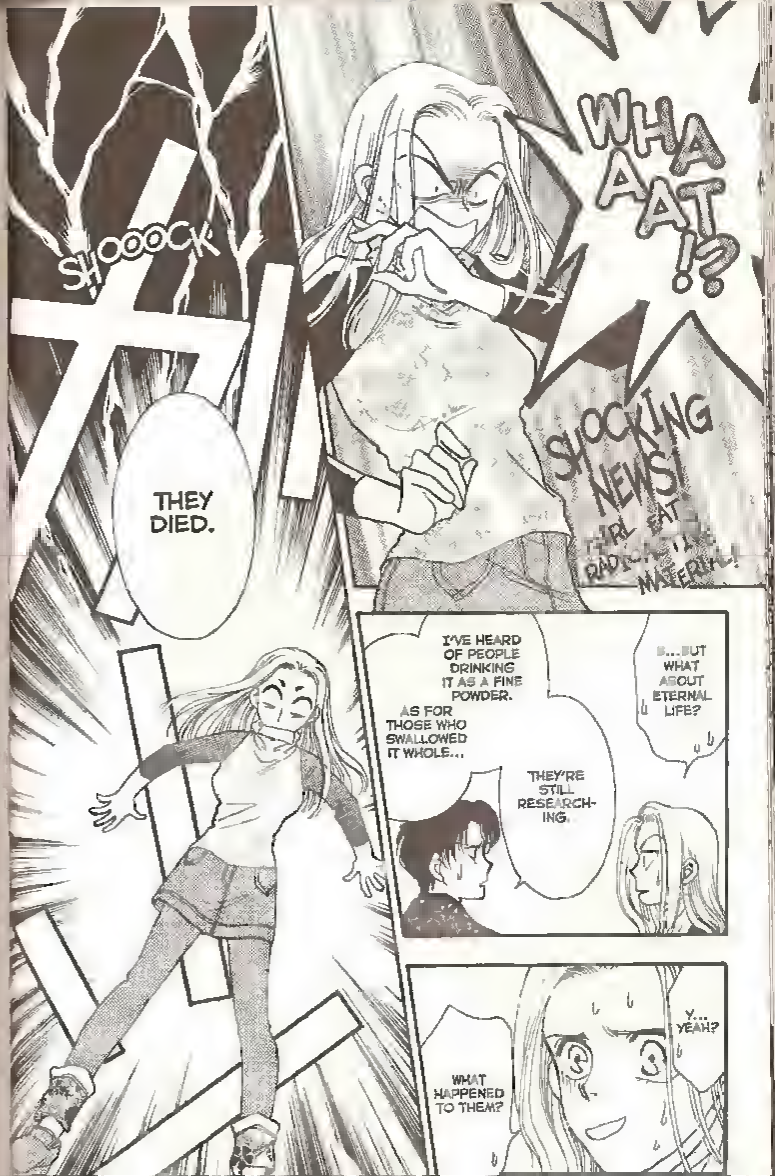

STILL, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY FIND US.
DON'T ASK ME THAT NOW!!
You're an adult! Stop crying!!
SNIFFLE
YOU REALLY THINK I SHOULD GET ANOTHER JOB?
JOB CHANGE HEAVEN
...THERE'S NO WAY I'M HANDING THIS OVER TO THOSE GUYS.
WITH WHAT I KNOW NOW...


YOU'RE RIGHT.
I UNDER-STAND.
REACH
LET ME HOLD IT FOR YOU.
I THINK IT WOULD BE SAFER TO GIVE IT TO ME.


HUH?
AS FAR AS METAL GOES, IT MEANS BINDING OR ACTIVATING THE ATOMS AND MOLECULES THAT MAKE IT UP.
?
?
IN OTHER WORDS.. IF THIS LITTLE PEBBLE GOT ITS FULL POWER..
...IT COULD MAYBE TURN INTO PLUTONIUM.
PLUTONIUM? YOU MEAN..
THE TRUTH IS, THEY DON'T MEAN CHANGING SOMETHING TO ACTUAL GOLD, BUT...
...BRINGING FORTH "THE GOLD WITHIN" ALL THINGS.
IN OTHER WORDS, THE "TRUE POWER" HIDDEN INSIDE.
THAT IS, TRANSFORMING THE IMPERFECT INTO THE PERFECT.
WELL, I HAVE NO IDEA IF...
...I CAN TRUST YOU!
WHEN ALCHEMISTS SAY "TURN TO GOLD"...
...IT'S JUST A METAPHOR.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THAT WILL DO TO YOUR BODY!
BUT...
YOU KNOW ...
WHAT? LIKE TURN ME INTO GOLD?
GIGGLE
GIGGLE

P-PLEASE CALM DOWN
WE NEED TO GET YOU TO THE HOSPITAL--
AH.
A... ARE YOU JOKING!?
YOU MEAN I'M GOING TO DIE!?
What a pathetic way to go!!
NOOOO!!

UEH.


SHOOOCK
THEY DIED.
WHAAAT!?
SHOCKING NEWS!
I'VE HEARD OF PEOPLE DRINKING IT AS A FINE POWDER.
AS FOR THOSE WHO SWALLOWED IT WHOLE...
THEY'RE STILL RESEARCHING.
B...BUT WHAT ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
Y... YEAH?

Good question.
Is he... okay in the head?
WHAT'S HE SAYING ...?
MIHARU-SAN.
I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO DO THIS...
IT MAKES ME REEEEALLY TIRED...
I WANT TO SHOW YOU HOW THERE ARE STONES...
...WITH TRULY AMAZING POWERS.
SLIP
IT WAS NOT OF YOU TO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RING.
BUT...

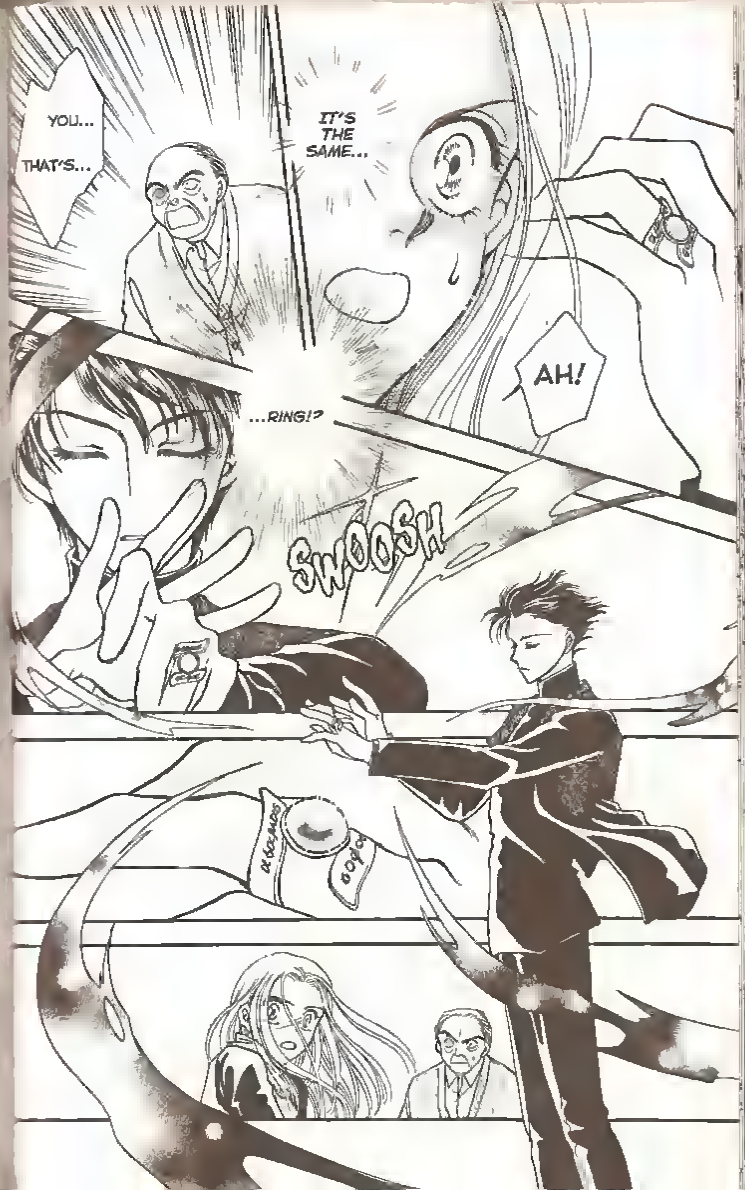
THEN UNTIL IT LEAVES YOU NATURALLY...
...I'LL HAVE TO STAY AT YOUR HOUSE.
NATUR-ALLY ...?
WHAT A VULGAR THING TO SAY!!
That's sexual harassment!

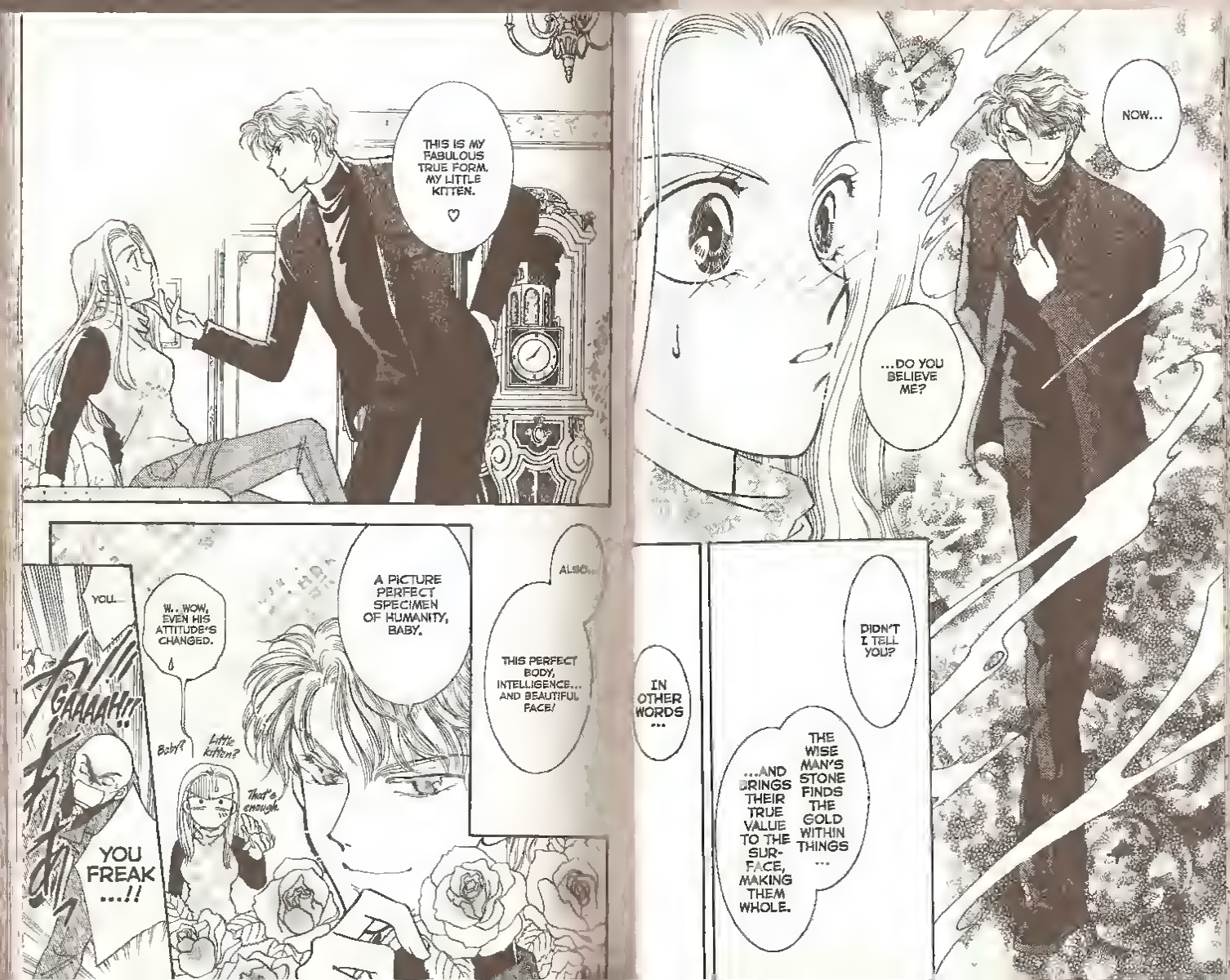
NOW, THROW IT UP FOR US.
YOU THINK IT'S THAT EASY!?
I'm not some human puppet!

I REALLY HAVE NO CHOICE.
H... HEY...
WOBBLE...

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO ME?
Over heeeere
UM, EXCUSE ME...?
IF THE RING SELLS SAFELY, I'LL LET YOU GO.
THE BLACK MARKET FOLK WILL PAY MORE THAN YOU EVER COULD.

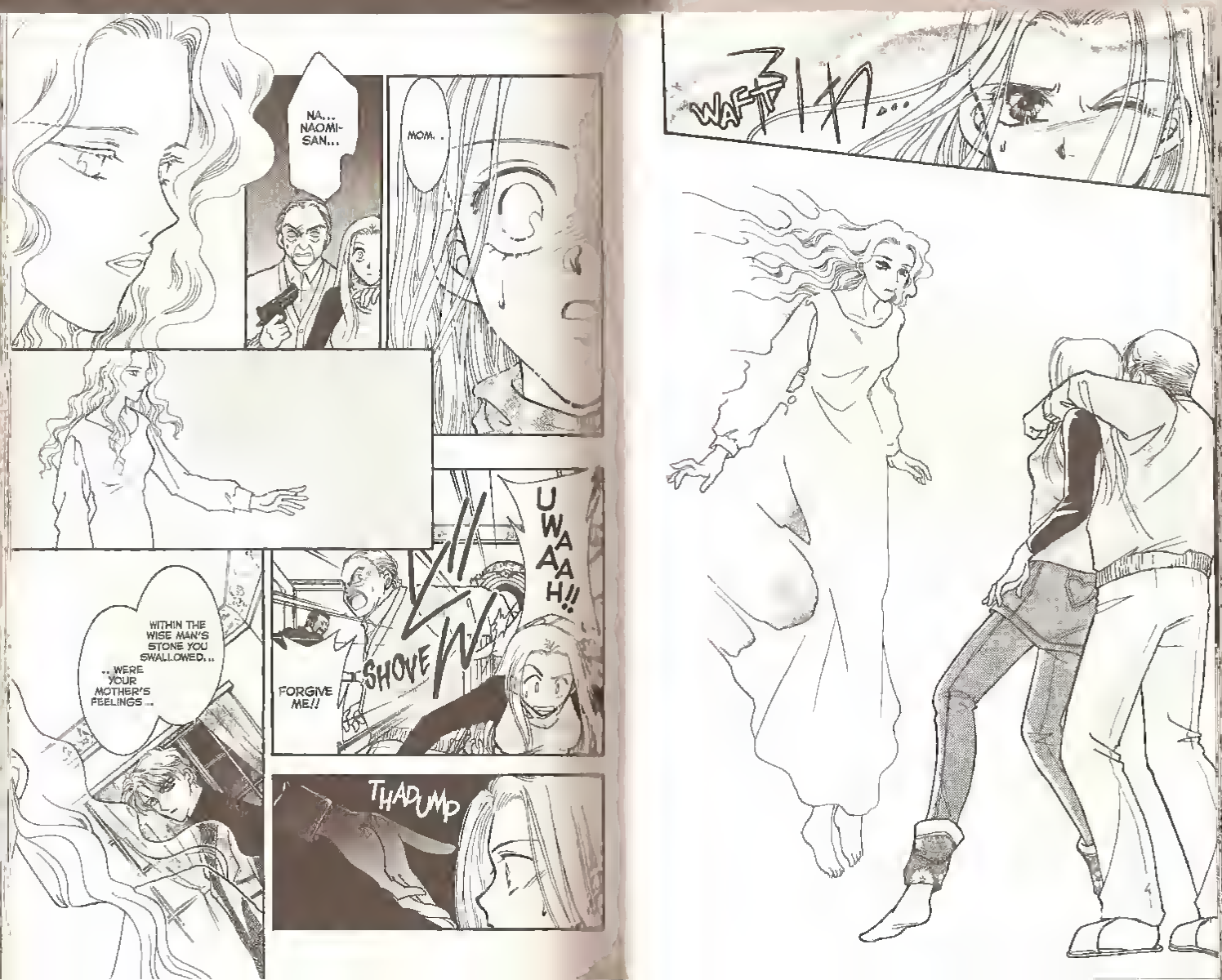
HIS HAIR...
IT'S TURNING BLONDE...

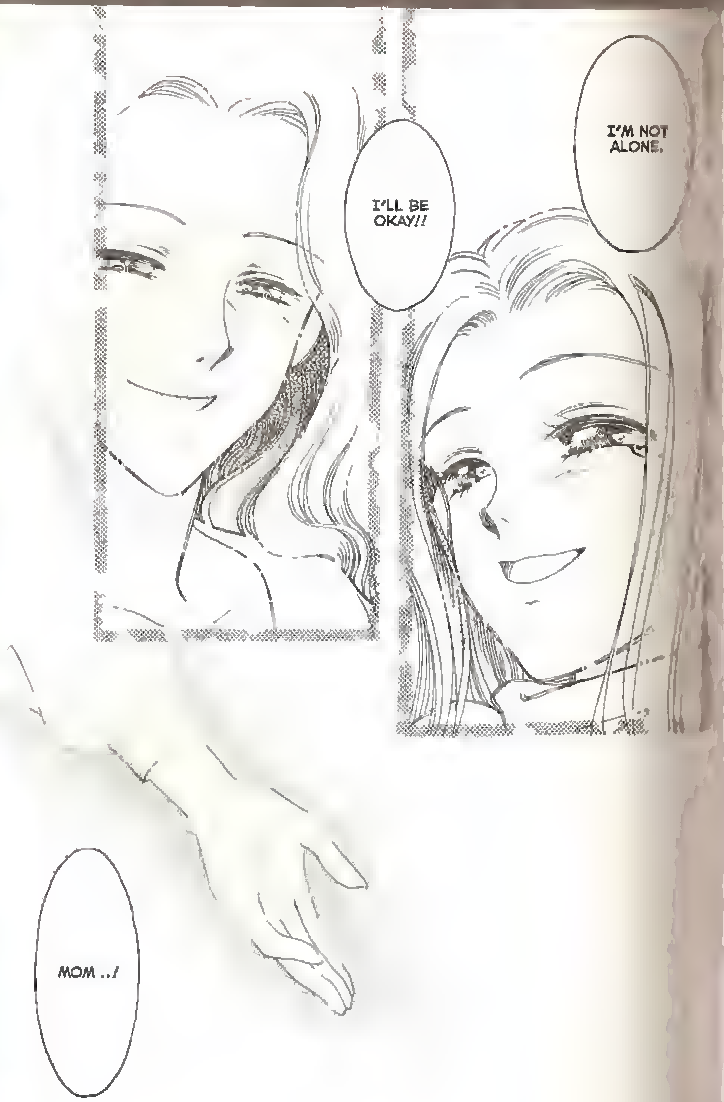

YOU...
THAT'S...
IT'S THE SAME...
AH!
...RING!?
SWOOSH
CONTROL
POWER

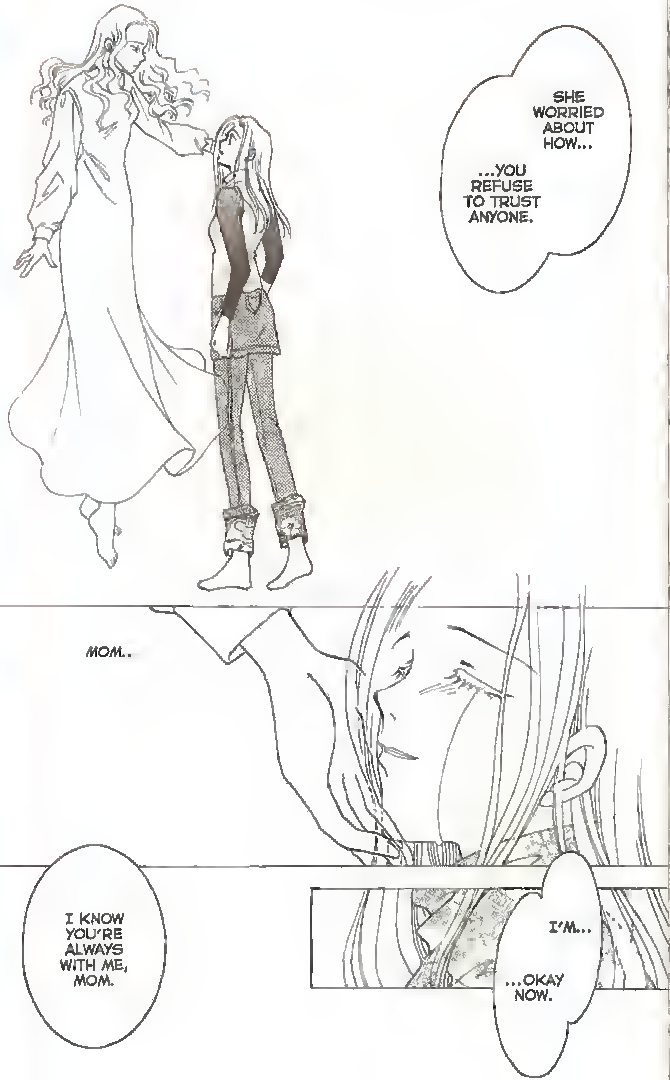

NOW...
...DO YOU BELIEVE ME?
DIDN'T I TELL YOU?
THE WISE MAN'S STONE FINDS THE GOLD WITHIN THINGS ...
...AND BRINGS THEIR TRUE VALUE TO THE SURFACE, MAKING THEM WHOLE.
IN OTHER WORDS ...
THIS IS MY FABULOUS TRUE FORM, MY LITTLE KITTEN. ♡
ALSO...
THIS PERFECT BODY, INTELLIGENCE... AND BEAUTIFUL FACE!
A PICTURE PERFECT SPECIMEN OF HUMANITY, BABY.
W.. WOW, EVEN HIS ATTITUDE'S CHANGED.
Baby?
Little kitten?
That's enough.
YOU...
GAAAAH!!
YOU FREAK ...!!

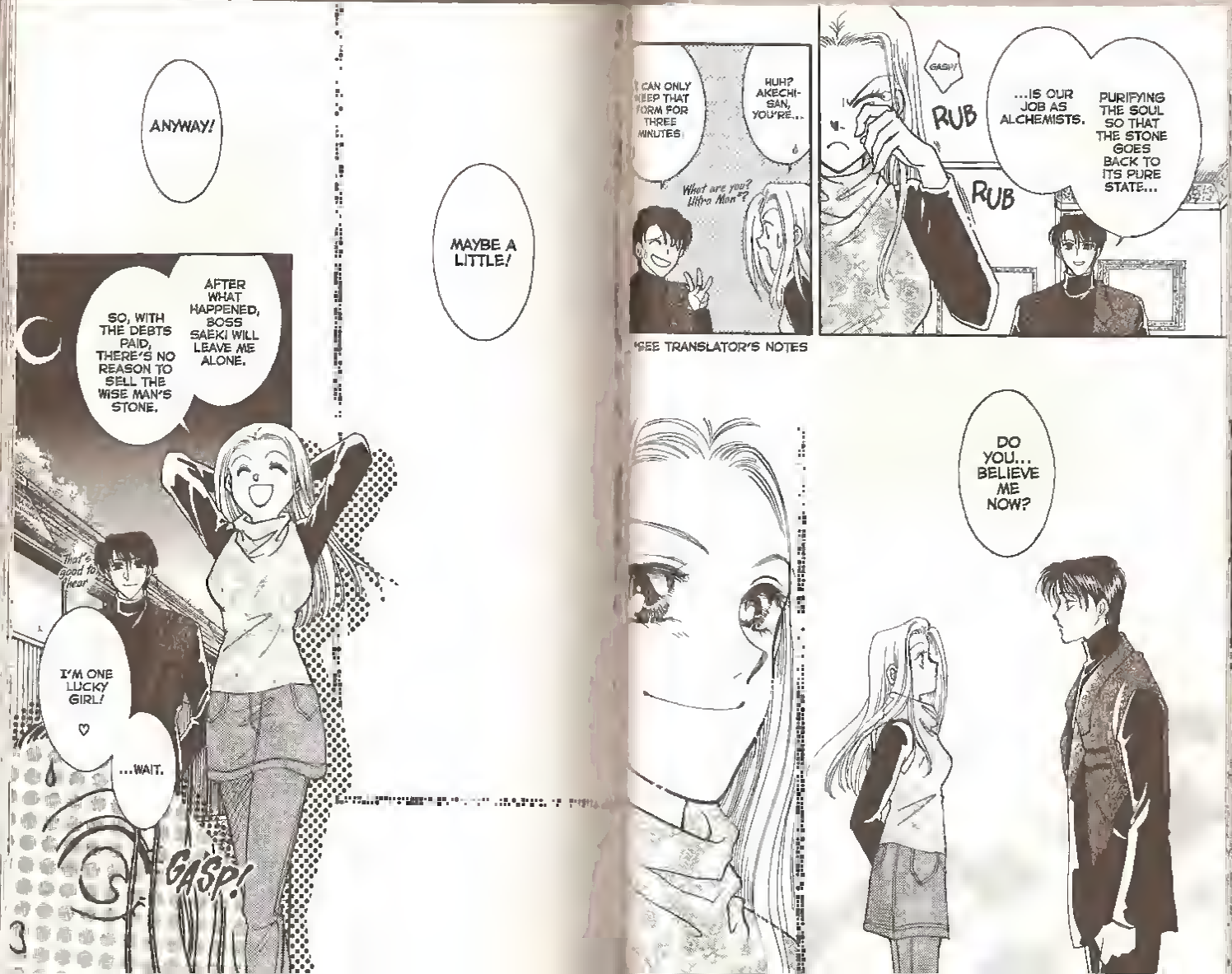
FLASH
YOU BUG.
THREATENING AN ALCHEMIST WITH A ROCK?
HOW STUPID IS THAT!?
AH.
THUD
SLAP
SLAM
GWAAH!
EEEK! AKECHI-SAN!
WHY... YOU...!
GRAB

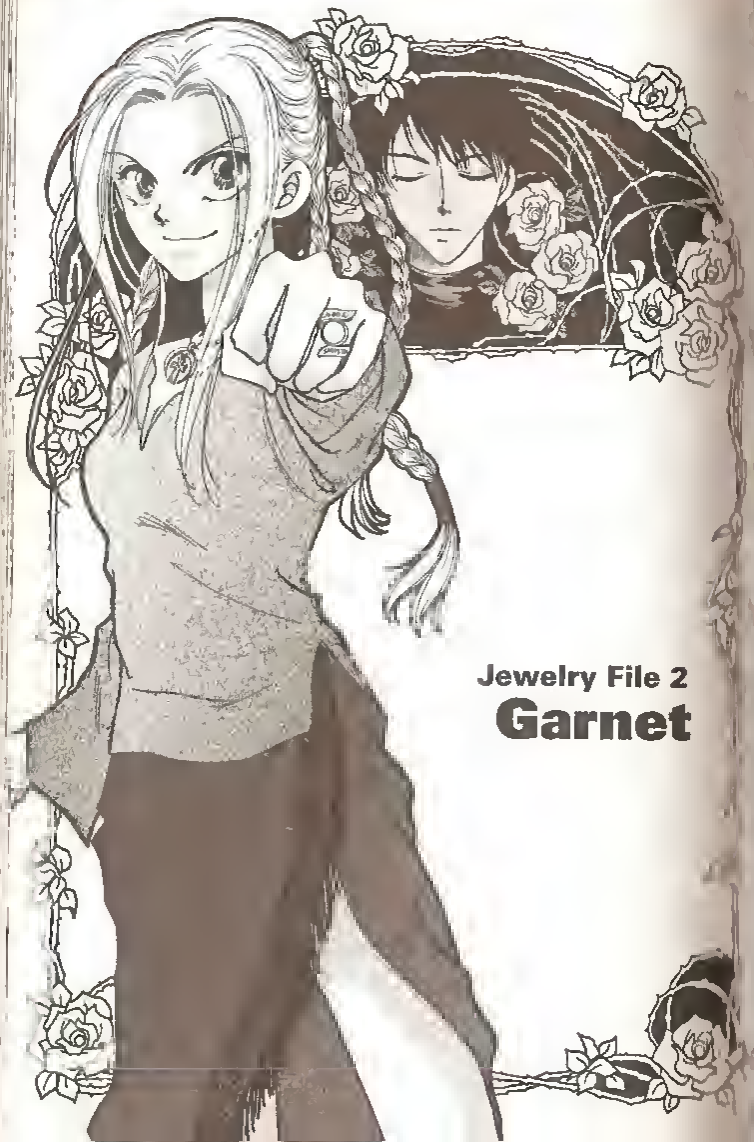
I SWEAR, I'LL KILL HER!
D... DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
I'M SERIOUS!
W... WAIT A MINUTE, BOSS.
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
WH...WHAT DID I EVER DO TO DESERVE THIS!?
THADUMP
THADUMP
THADUMP
MOM ...!!
THADUMP
REACH.
I DON'T WANT THIS!
E...EVEN THOUGH THIS IS ALL SO CRAZY...
...IT MIGHT ALSO BE SORT OF... COOL.
HOW WAS THAT, HONEY? ♡
IF YOU DON'T STOP, I'LL KILL HER!!
IF...


NA... NAOMI-SAN...
MOM. .
SHOVE
UWAAAH!!
FORGIVE ME!!
WITHIN THE WISE MAN'S STONE YOU SWALLOWED... ...WERE YOUR MOTHER'S FEELINGS ...
THADUMP
WAFT
IN...


I'M NOT ALONE.
I'LL BE OKAY!!
MOM ..!


SHE WORRIED ABOUT HOW...
...YOU REFUSE TO TRUST ANYONE.
MOM..
I KNOW YOU'RE ALWAYS WITH ME, MOM.
I'M...
...OKAY NOW.

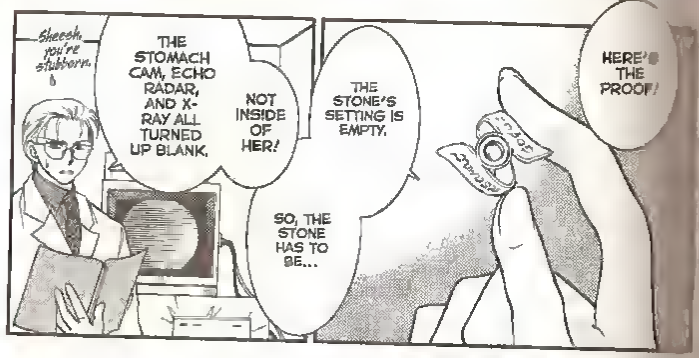

ANYWAY!
MAYBE A LITTLE!
SO, WITH THE DEBTS PAID, THERE'S NO REASON TO SELL THE WISE MAN'S STONE.
AFTER WHAT HAPPENED, BOSS SAEKI WILL LEAVE ME ALONE.
That's good to hear
I'M ONE LUCKY GIRL! ♡
...WAIT.
GASP!
I CAN ONLY KEEP THAT FORM FOR THREE MINUTES!
HUH? AKECHI-SAN, YOU'RE...
What are you? Ultra Man*?
*SEE TRANSLATOR'S NOTES
GASP!
RUB
RUB
...IS OUR JOB AS ALCHEMISTS.
PURIFYING THE SOUL SO THAT THE STONE GOES BACK TO ITS PURE STATE...
DO YOU... BELIEVE ME NOW?



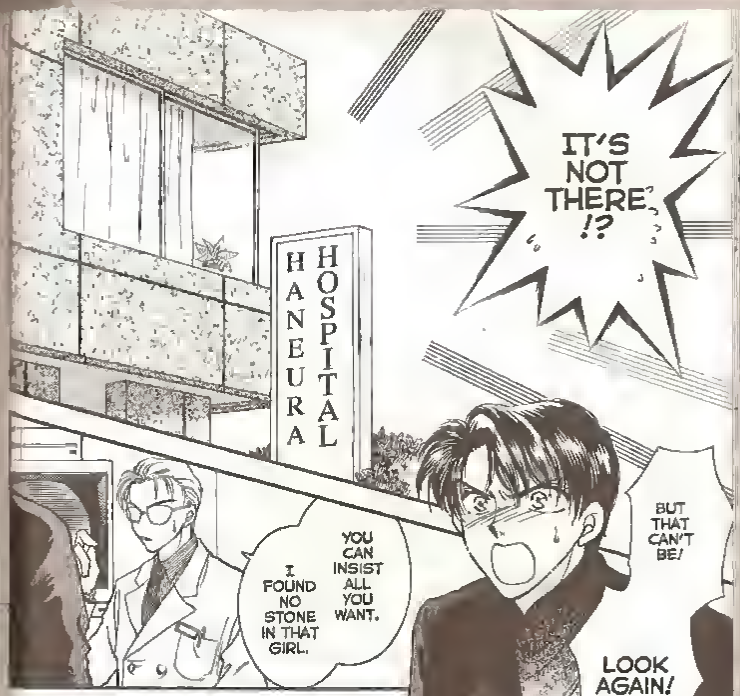
Jewelry File 2
Garnet

THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME WANT TO VOMIT.
THAT REMINDS ME...
YOU SAID THAT PEOPLE WHO SWALLOWED THE WISE MAN'S STONE... ALL DIED.
UEEH...
They lived in the Middle Ages
OF COURSE THEY'RE ALL DEAD BY NOW!
OH, THAT? WELL THE ONES WHO SWALLOWED THE STONE
...WERE FROM CENTURIES AGO
YOU'RE UNBELIEV-ABLE...
HUH?
DIDN'T... I MENTION THAT?

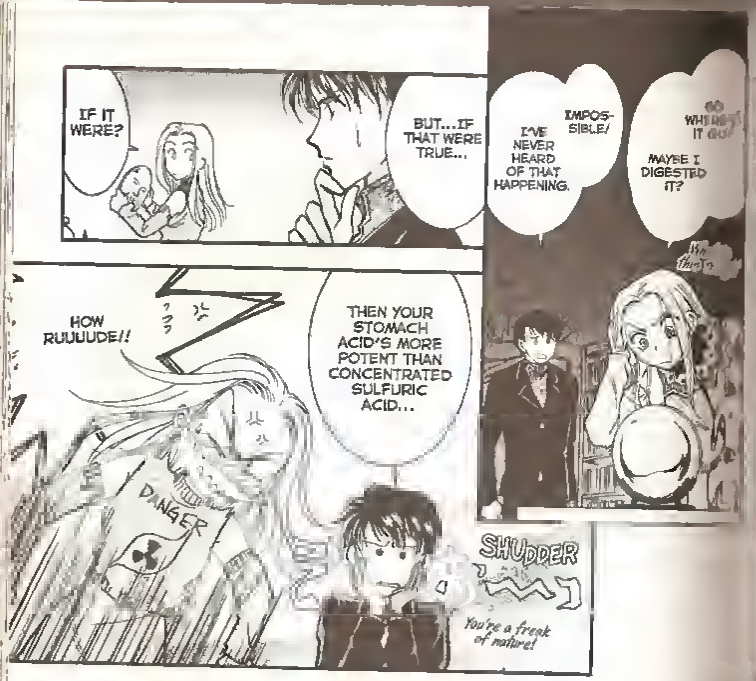
Jewelry File 1 : The Wise Man's Stone / OVER


Sheesh, you're stubborn.
THE STOMACH CAM, ECHO RADAR, AND X-RAY ALL TURNED UP BLANK.
NOT INSIDE OF HER!
THE STONE'S SETTING IS EMPTY.
SO, THE STONE HAS TO BE...
HERE'S THE PROOF!

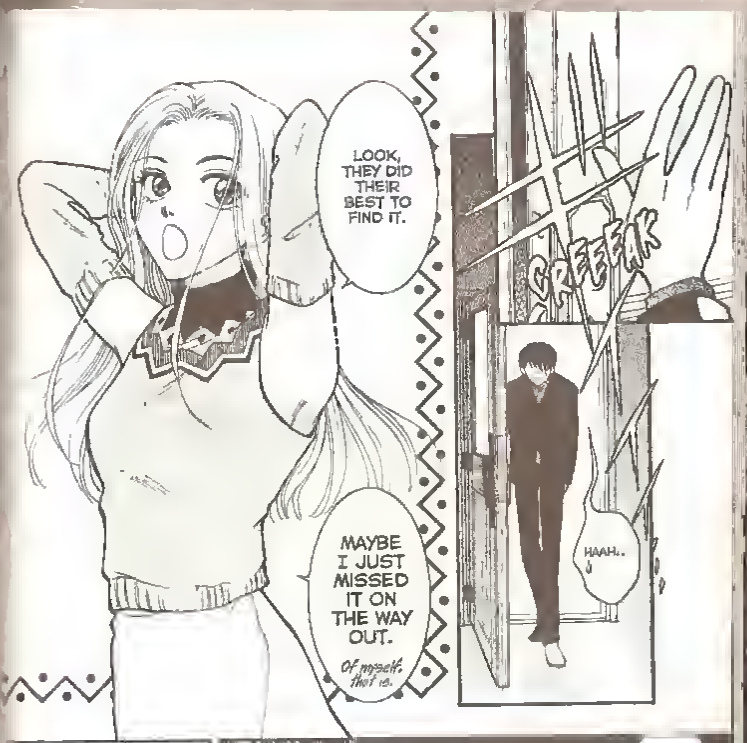
...CAN'T BE.
CLENCH
BUT THAT...
GET OVER IT!!
HUFF!
HUFF!
HOOO OGEG EGEH!!
LET'S TAKE OOOONE MORE LOOK AROUND.
SHOVE
SHOVE

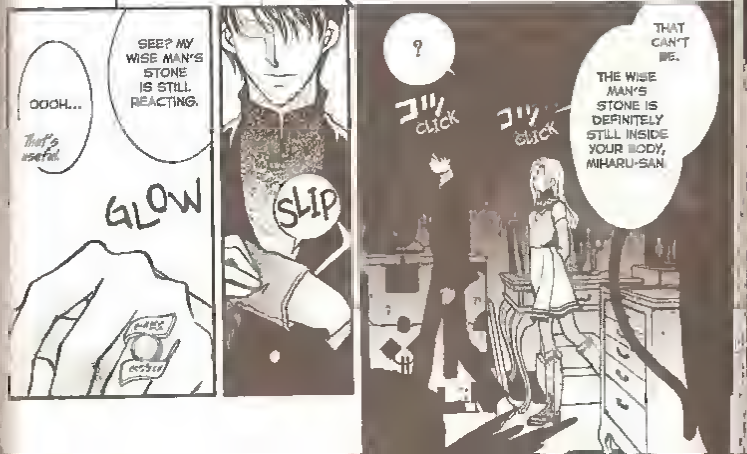

HANEURA HOSPITAL
IT'S NOT THERE!?
I FOUND NO STONE IN THAT GIRL.
YOU CAN INSIST ALL YOU WANT.
BUT THAT CAN'T BE!
LOOK AGAIN!

I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES!!
BUT I KNOW SHE SWALLOWED IT!
FU UGA GAGA GAH!!
SHOVE
SHOVE

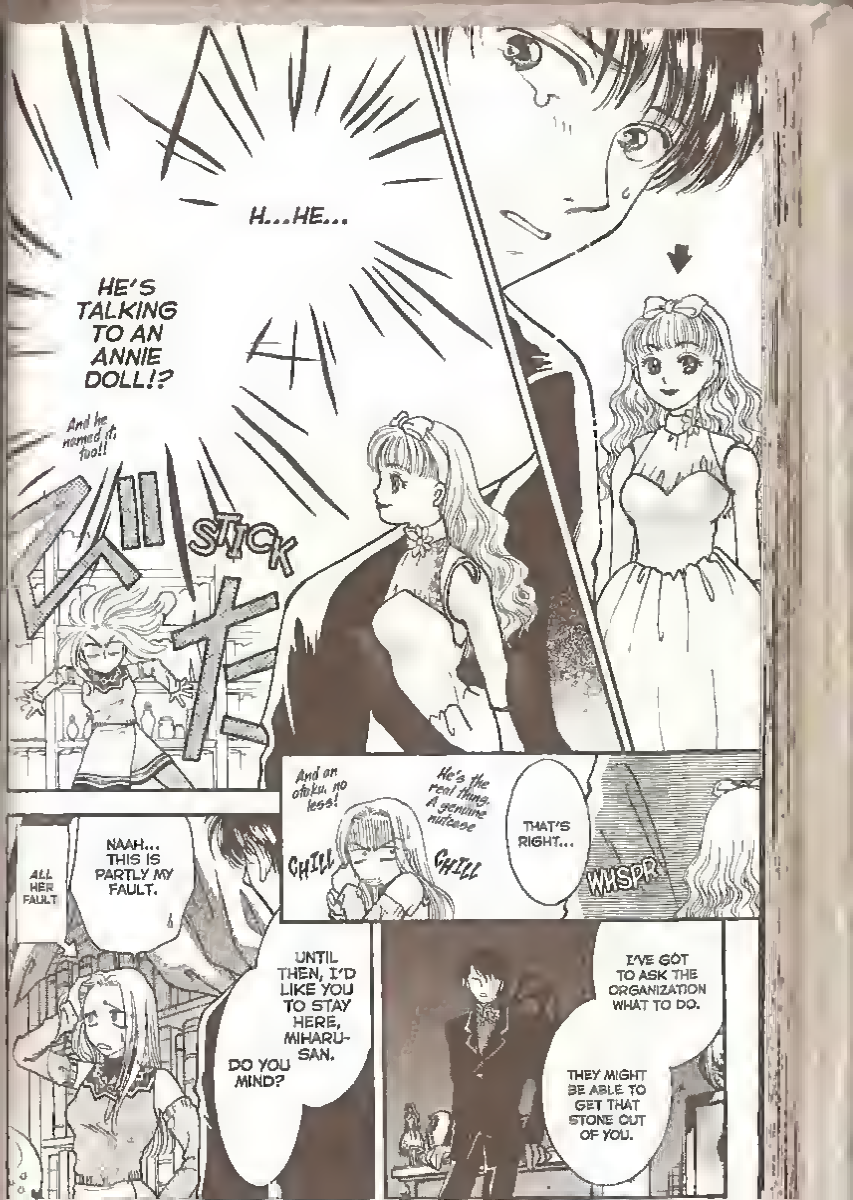

IF IT WERE?
BUT...IF THAT WERE TRUE...
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THAT HAPPENING.
IMPOSSIBLE!
MAYBE I DIGESTED IT?
SO WHERE'S IT GO?
HOW RUUUUDE!!
THEN YOUR STOMACH ACID'S MORE POTENT THAN CONCENTRATED SULFURIC ACID...
DANGER
SHUDDER
You're a freak of nature!

I NEED A GOOD EXCUSE TO GIVE THE ORGANIZATION...
It's like walls are the best friend...
Argh!
AAH!
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE I FOUND A WISE MAN'S STONE AND THEN LOST IT!
BEATRICE?
WHAT SHOULD I DO...
BEATRICE?


LOOK, THEY DID THEIR BEST TO FIND IT.
MAYBE I JUST MISSED IT ON THE WAY OUT.
Of myself, that is.
GREEEK
HAAH..

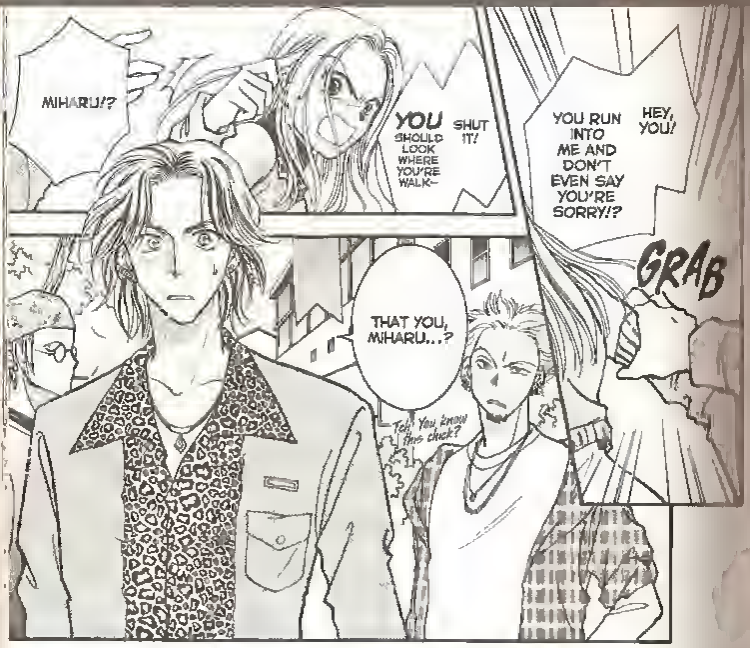

OOOH...
That's useful.
SEE? MY WISE MAN'S STONE IS STILL REACTING.
GLOW
SLIP
?
コツ CLICK
コツ CLICK
THAT CAN'T BE.
THE WISE MAN'S STONE IS DEFINITELY STILL INSIDE YOUR BODY, MIHARU-SAN!

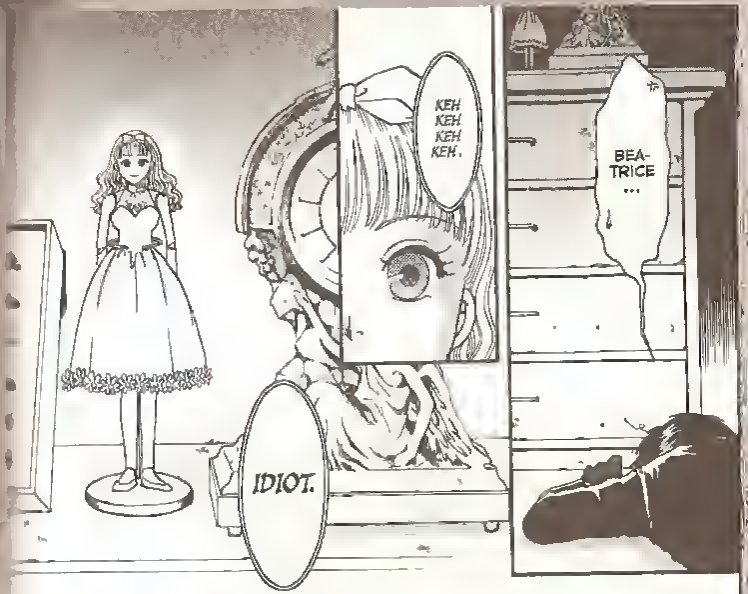
Though you'll still end up dead.
!?
I CAN'T FORGET THAT HE BELONGS TO A CREEPY ALCHEMIST ORGANIZATION.
AND HE CAN TURN INTO A SUPERMAN WHO CAN SHATTER STONES.
EVEN THOUGH HE LOOKS INNOCENT...
...I KNOW HIS TRUE NATURE!
Uh, I'll talk about that...
IT...IT WASN'T ME!!
WAS . THAT YOU...?
GASP
THAT'S RIGHT!
OH, YEAH? I DON'T SEE ANYBODY ELSE HERE!

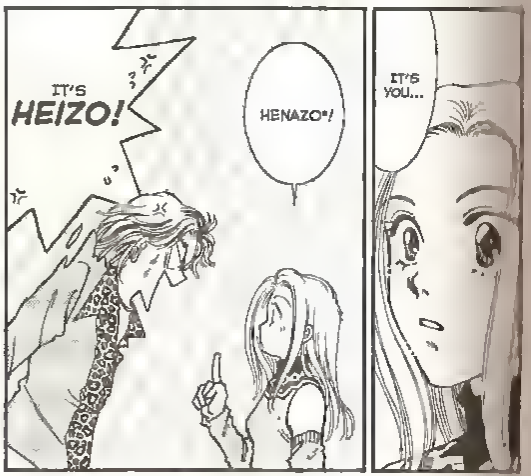

H...HE...
HE'S TALKING TO AN ANNIE DOLL!?
And he named it, too!!
STICK
And an otaku, no less!
He's the real thing. A genuine nutcase
CHILL
CHILL
THAT'S RIGHT...
WISPR
ALL HER FAULT
NAAH... THIS IS PARTLY MY FAULT.
UNTIL THEN, I'D LIKE YOU TO STAY HERE, MIHARU-SAN.
DO YOU MIND?
I'VE GOT TO ASK THE ORGANIZATION WHAT TO DO.
THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THAT STONE OUT OF YOU.

STARTLE
MIHARU-SA-
AA AAA AHH !!!
HE'S GONNA BEAT ME TO DEATH!?
GROBER
KILL OR BE KILLED! HI!
BEEEK!
MIHA

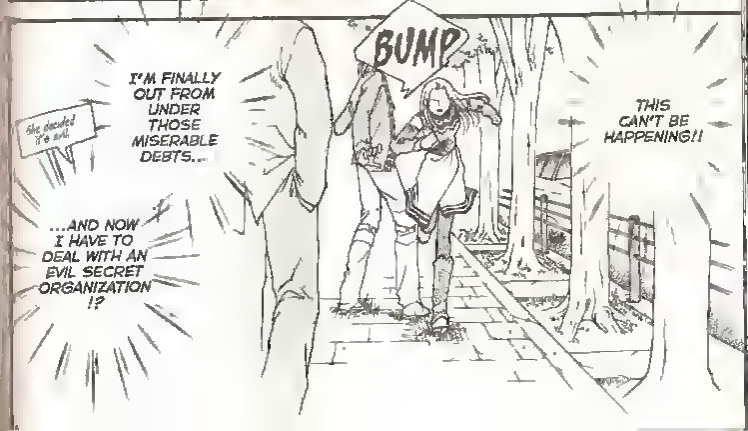
LOOKING AT THIS PLACE...
...ALL I SEE IS SUSPICIOUS CREEPINESS.
IT'S AN IRON...
...ROD?
ROLL ROLL
CLATTER
BUMP
MIHARU-SAN, PLEASE UNDERS-

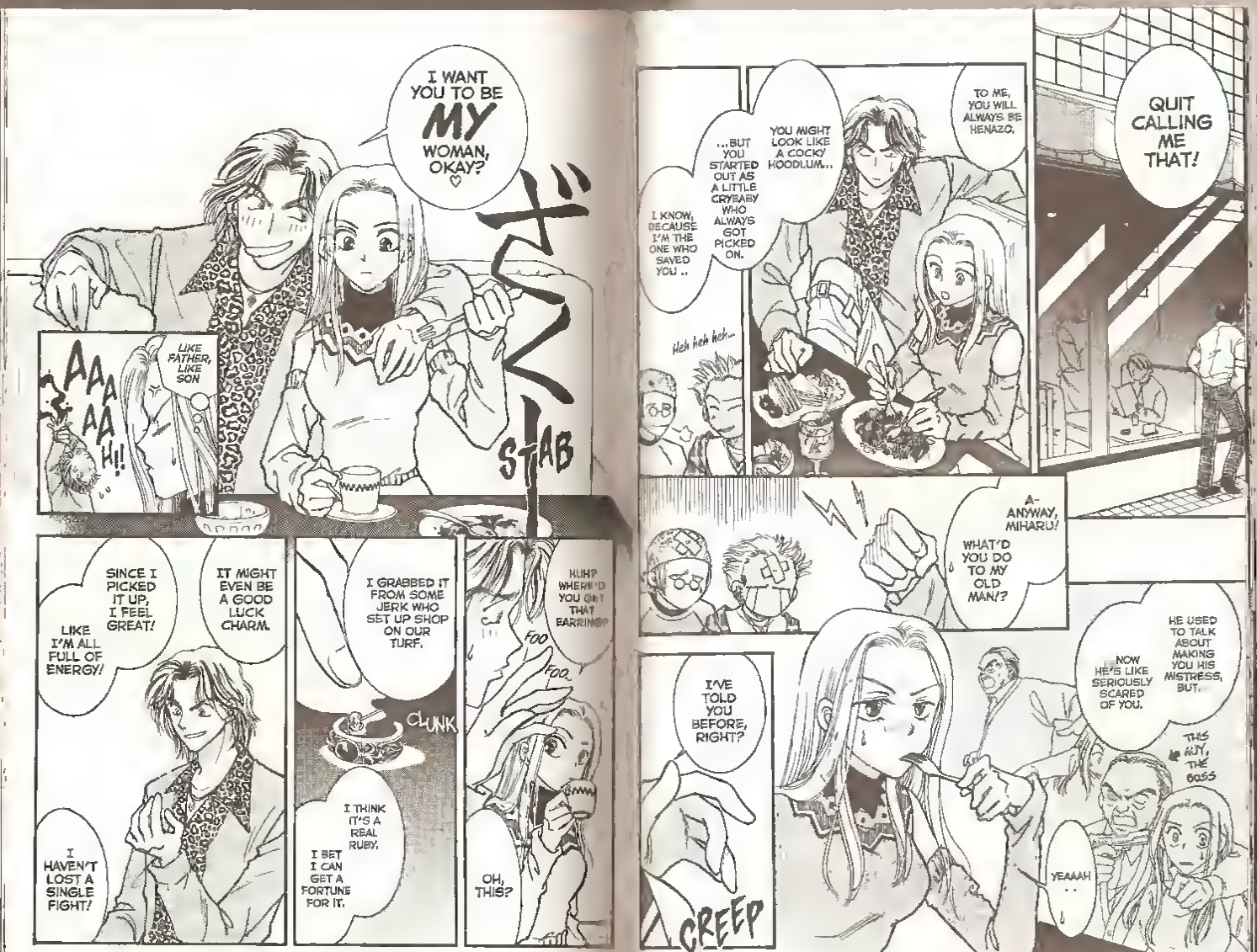




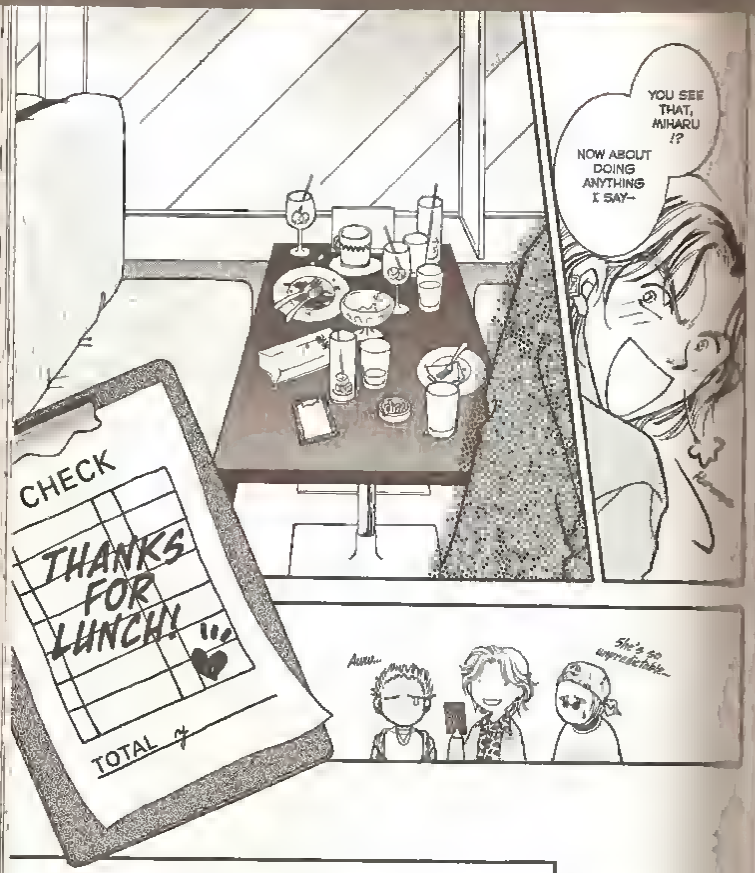


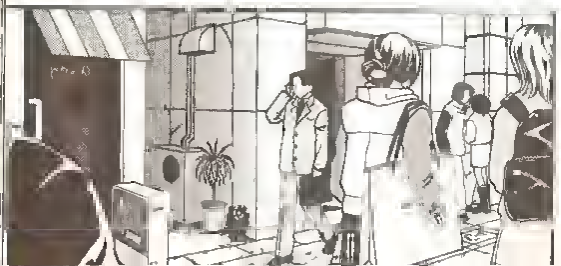
*SEE TRANSLATOR'S NOTES


She decided it's evil.
I'M FINALLY OUT FROM UNDER THOSE MISERABLE DEBTS...
...AND NOW I HAVE TO DEAL WITH AN EVIL SECRET ORGANIZATION !?
BUMP
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!!

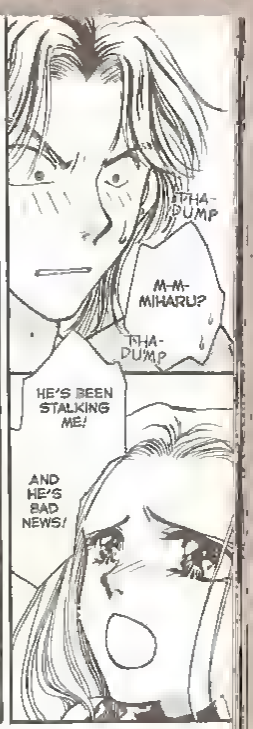

I WANT YOU TO BE MY WOMAN, OKAY?
ズバッ
STAB
AAAAH!!
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON
SINCE I PICKED IT UP, I FEEL GREAT!
IT MIGHT EVEN BE A GOOD LUCK CHARM.
LIKE I'M ALL FULL OF ENERGY!
I HAVEN'T LOST A SINGLE FIGHT!
I GRABBED IT FROM SOME JERK WHO SET UP SHOP ON OUR TURF.
CLUNK
I THINK IT'S A REAL RUBY.
I BET I CAN GET A FORTUNE FOR IT.
HUH? WHERE'D YOU GET THAT EARRING?
FOO
FOO.
OH, THIS?
QUIT CALLING ME THAT!
TO ME, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE HENAZO.
YOU MIGHT LOOK LIKE A COCKY HOODLUM...
...BUT YOU STARTED OUT AS A LITTLE CRYBABY WHO ALWAYS GOT PICKED ON.
I KNOW, BECAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO SAVED YOU ..
Heh heh heh...
A-ANYWAY, MIHARU!
WHAT'D YOU DO TO MY OLD MAN!?
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE, RIGHT?
CREEP
HE USED TO TALK ABOUT MAKING YOU HIS MISTRESS, BUT...
NOW HE'S LIKE SERIOUSLY SCARED OF YOU.
THIS GUY, THE BOSS
YEAAAH..

EEE EEE EK !!
MIHARU-SAAAAN...
I forecound yuuuuu...
WHO'S HE?
I CAN ALWAYS FIND A WISE MAN'S STONE!
IT'S NO USE RUNNING AWAY!
SAVE ME, HEIZO!
GLOMP
BUT IF YOU WANT IT, I WOULD-
NO, THANKS.
I don't have mercid care. ♡
I FEEL A REALLY BAD VIBE FROM IT.
THAT'S NOT IT. AFTER ALL...
A GOOD LUCK CHARM?
THERE'S NO CHANCE OF MY RUNNING INTO ANOTHER STONE WITH WEIRD POWERS...
NO WAY!
SHAKE SHAKE
THERE ARE SOME STONES WITH TRULY AMAZING POWERS.


YOU SEE THAT, MIHARU!?
NOW ABOUT DOING ANYTHING I SAY--
CHECK
THANKS FOR LUNCH!
TOTAL
Aww...
She's so unpredictable...



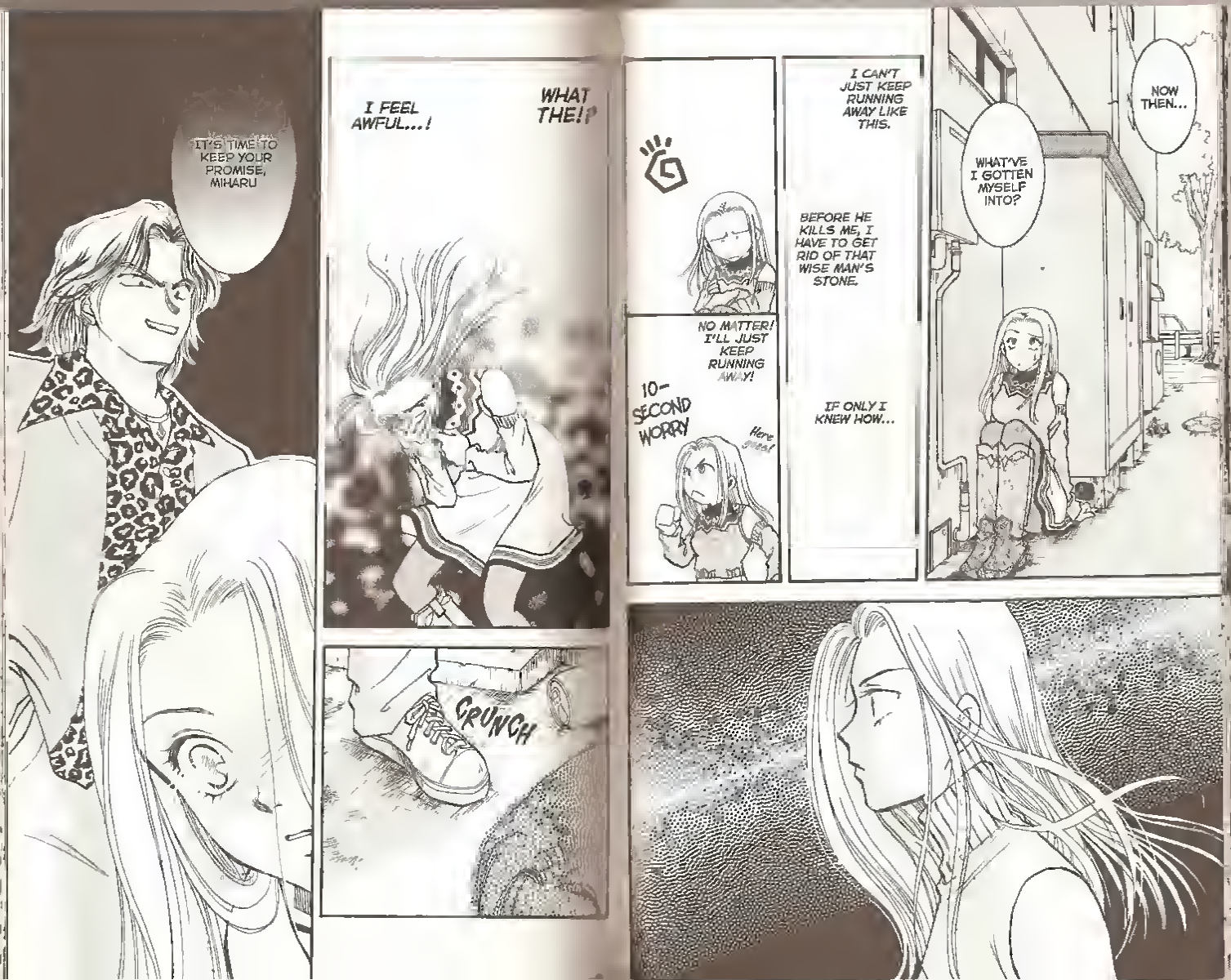
IF YOU TAKE CARE OF HIM FOR ME...
...I'LL DO AAAANYTHING YOU SAY.
♡


THA-DUMP
M-M-MIHARU?
THA-DUMP
HE'S BEEN STALKING ME!
AND HE'S BAD NEWS!

YIPE YIPE YIPE!

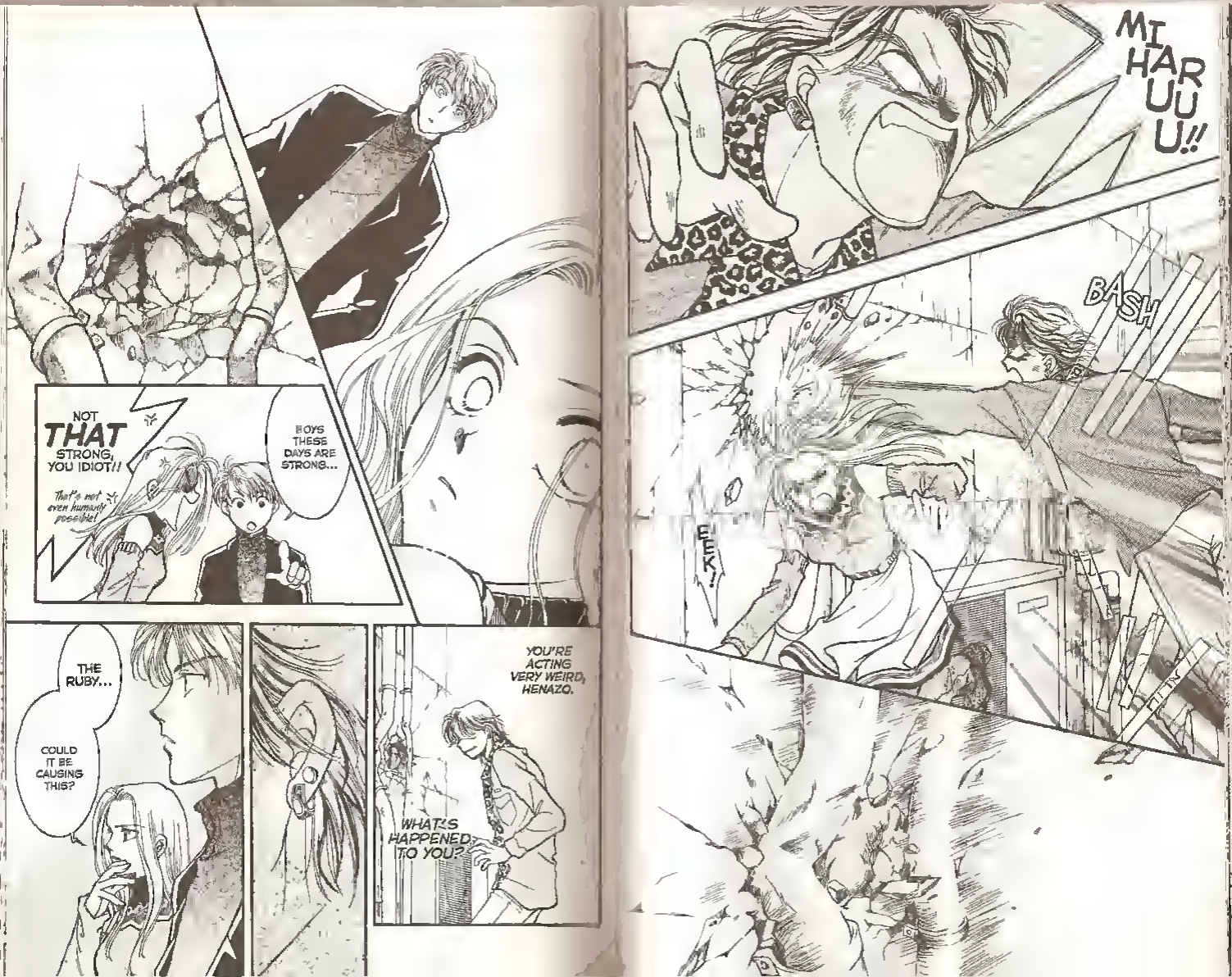
AH...

GET 'IM!!


IT'S TIME TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE, MIHARU
I FEEL AWFUL...!
WHAT THE!?
CRUNCH
I CAN'T JUST KEEP RUNNING AWAY LIKE THIS.
BEFORE HE KILLS ME, I HAVE TO GET RID OF THAT WISE MAN'S STONE.
IF ONLY I KNEW HOW...
NO MATTER! I'LL JUST KEEP RUNNING AWAY!
10-SECOND WORRY
Here goes!
NOW THEN...
WHAT'VE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?

TOO BAD I DON'T HAVE A WHITE HORSE.
AKECHI-SAN!!
(TRANS-FORMED VERSION)
CRASH
CRUNCH
AH...
BASH
WHEN MY PRINCESS IS IN TROUBLE..
...I COME DASHING TO HER RESCUE.
I MEAN IT! LET GO!!
HENAZO, STOP IT!
AT LEAST GIVE ME A KISS!
NOOO!!
I'M NOT KISSING ANYONE UNTIL I'M AN ADULT!
YAWK
OOF!
CLOBBER

HE SHOULD BE OUT FOR AT LEAST THIRTY MINUTES...
NOW THAT'S A SURPRISE ...
NO WAY... How is
!?
CHILL
Heh.
BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY NOW, HONEY. ♡
LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE IN SOME TROUBLE
...AM BY YOUR SIDE AND INVINCIBLE!
NOW THAT THE WISE MAN'S STONE HAS TRANSFORMED ME INTO THIS PICTURE PERFECT SPECIMEN OF A MAN, I...
DASH
Fast.


MIHARUU!!
BASH
EEK!
NOT THAT STRONG, YOU IDIOT!!
That's not even humanly possible!
BOYS THESE DAYS ARE STRONG...
THE RUBY...
COULD IT BE CAUSING THIS?
YOU'RE ACTING VERY WEIRD, HENAZO.
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?

WHAT'S THIS SHADOW THING...?
WHAT!?
FLAIL
THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR THIS!!
EEEK! STOP IIIIT!!
FLAIL
SLITHER
HENA ZZZZ ZOO OO!!
PUUUSH
!?
YOU DON'T NEED TO GET MAD!
I...I WAS JUST GUESSING!
ZIP
WHAT...
...MAKES YOU THINK THAT?
GRAB
KEEP
STOP MESSING AROUND, HENAZO-KUN...
ST...
SHOVE

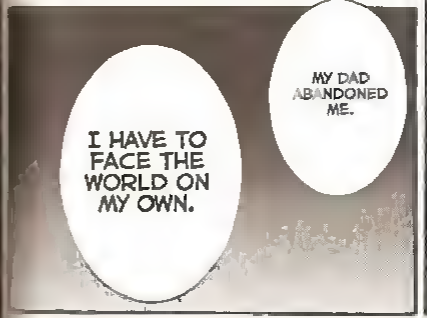
THAT'S RIGHT, MY LITTLE KITTEN.
RUBIES CAN BE GOOD LUCK CHARMS OF FORCED LOVE.
THEY FUEL DESIRE AND AMPLIFY THE POSSESSOR'S LIFE FORCE
IT'S NOT JUST THE WISE MAN'S STONE...
...BUT ALL STONES THAT GIVE OFF POWER.
SO, THE CUSTOM OF STONE HEALING USES THAT POWER FOR PRACTICAL REASONS.
BUT, THE WEARER AND THE STONE HAVE TO BE COMPATIBLE.
EVERY STONE WILL NOT WORK FOR EVERY PERSON.
THAT BOY'S RUBY HAS BEEN THROWING OUT POWER FOR A WHILE.
IT ECHOED HIS FEELINGS AND AMPLIFIED HIS NEGATIVE ENERGY.
FINALLY, IT JUST OVERRODE HIM.
URGH!
WHY DO THOSE EVIL STONES ALWAYS COME AFTER ME!?
I THINK IT'S A CASE OF "YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW."
Definitely the type to hold a grudge
HMPH!

YOU HAVE A STRONG SPIRIT.
...OR SO I'D LIKE TO BE.
YOU THINK YOU'RE READY, BUT THERE ARE ALWAYS CONSEQUENCES.

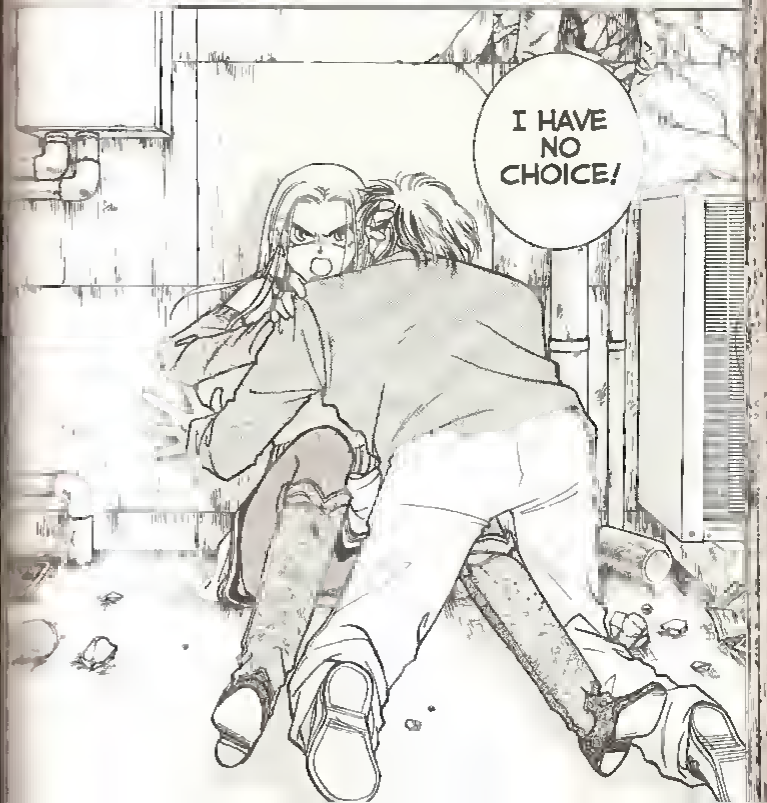
I KNOW.
I GOT HENAZO ALL RILED UP.

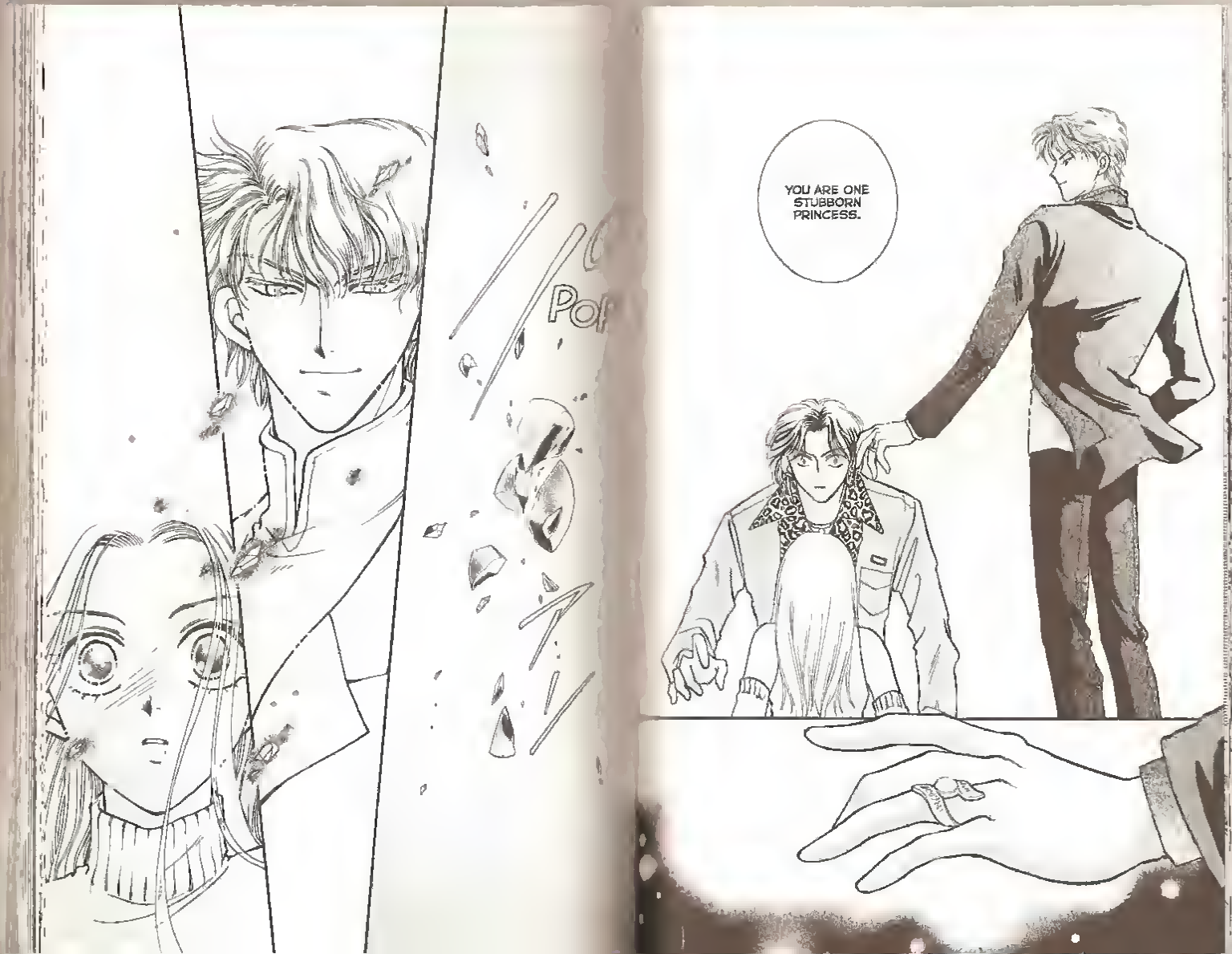
BUT...

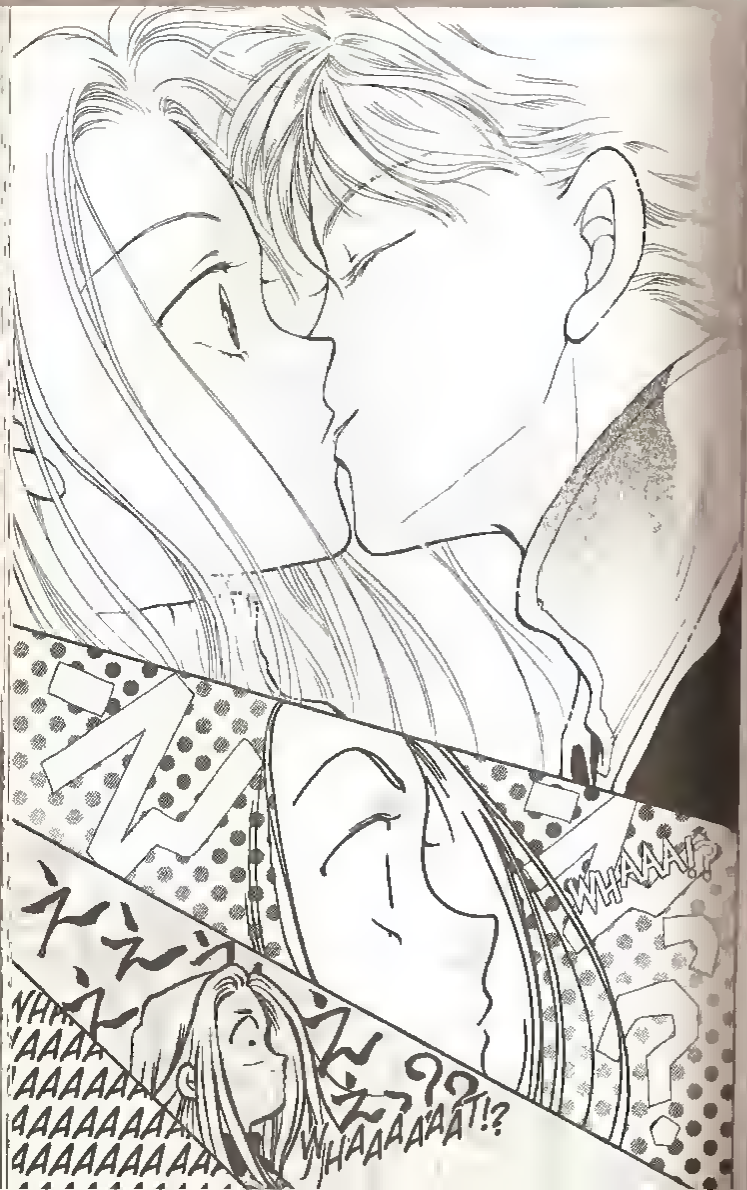
BUT...!!


I HAVE TO FACE THE WORLD ON MY OWN.
MY DAD ABANDONED ME.

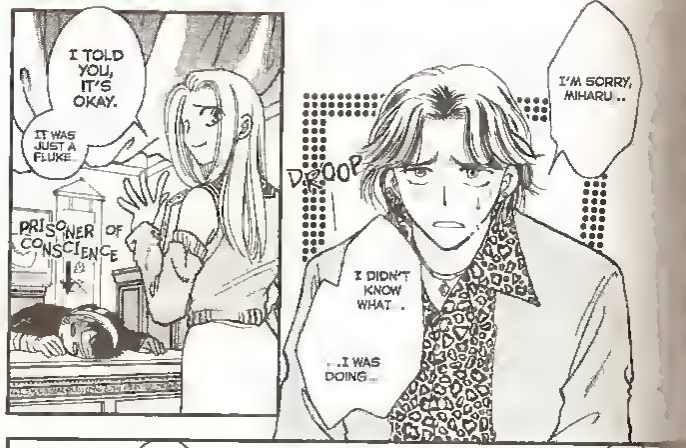
ANYWAY, IF YOU HAD LISTENED TO ME FROM THE START, NONE OF THIS—
SHUT UP!

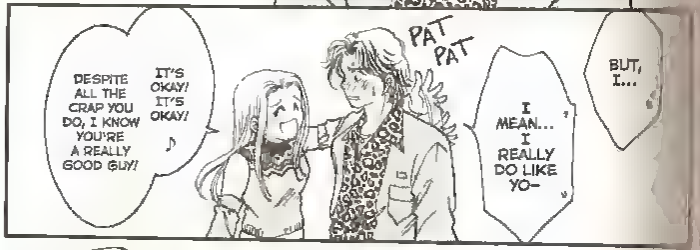

I HAVE NO CHOICE!


YOU ARE ONE STUBBORN PRINCESS.

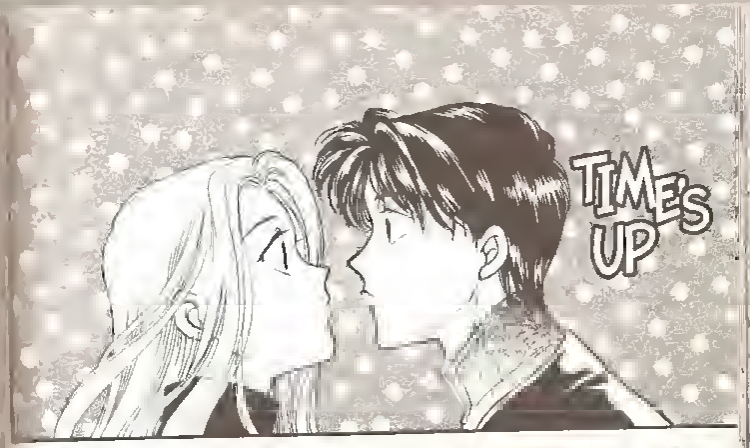

WHAAA!?
WHAAAAAAT!?

IT'S NOT LIKE I HATE STUBBORNNESS, HONEY.
♡
REACH
DROP
PHEW!
THUD
Who you calling honey?
TMP


I TOLD YOU, IT'S OKAY.
IT WAS JUST A FLUKE...
PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE
I'M SORRY, MIHARU..
D'OOP
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT..
..I WAS DOING...


DESPITE ALL THE CRAP YOU DO, I KNOW YOU'RE A REALLY GOOD GUY!
IT'S OKAY! IT'S OKAY! ♪
PAT PAT
I MEAN... I REALLY DO LIKE YO-
BUT, I...

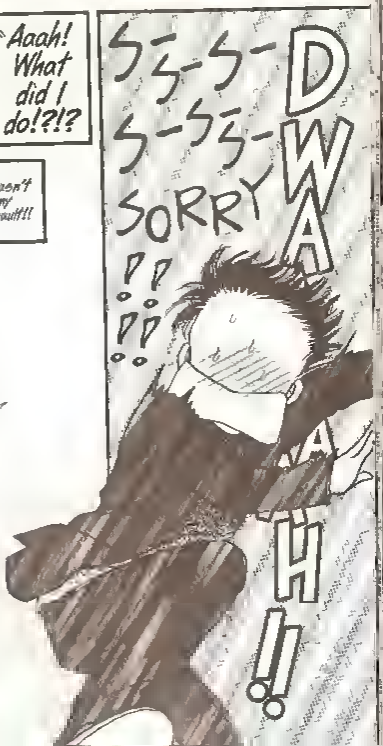
I GUESS MAYBE I DID DIGEST THAT WISE MAN'S STONE.
AND YOU, AKECHI-SAN!
EEP! I'M SORRY!!
AND WE'RE FRIENDS, RIGHT?
PETRIFIED!
CRMBL-
BLOWING AWAY


TIME'S UP

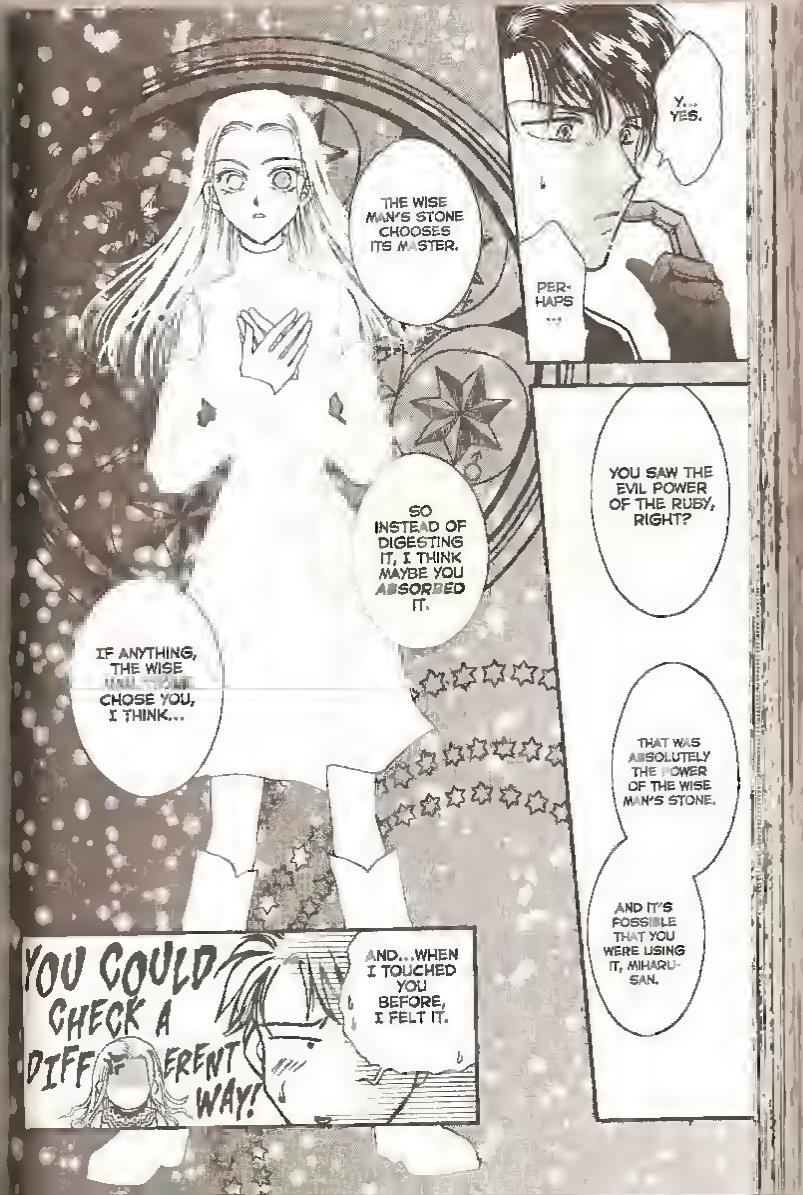
...for when I'm on adult...
I'm saving my kisses...
Aaah! What did I do!?!?

It wasn't my fault!!!

BASH

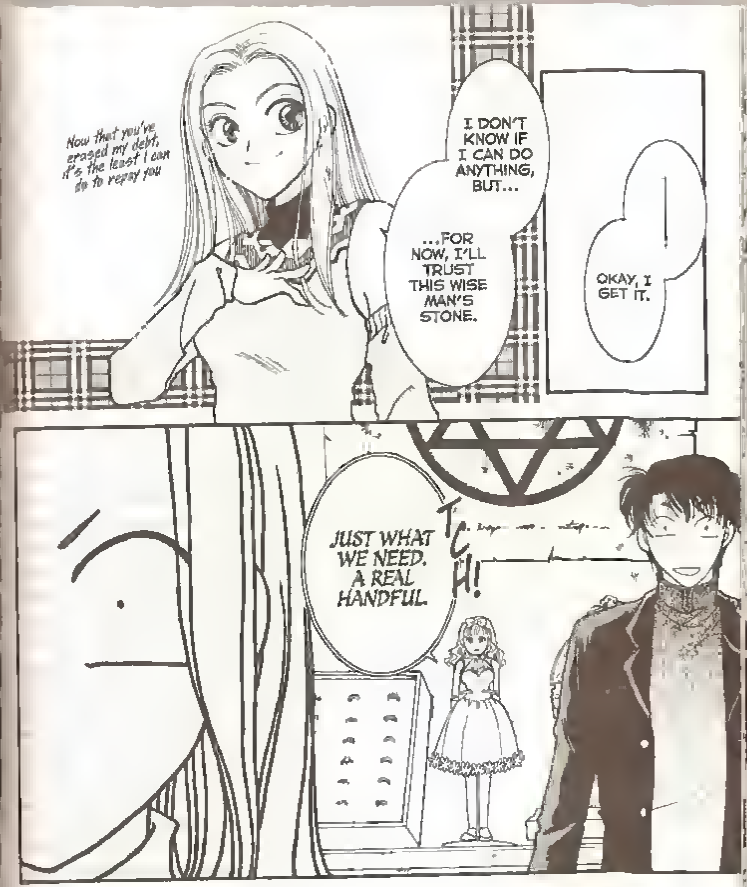

S-S-S-
S-S-S-
SORRY
!?
!?
!?
DWA
A
H
!!

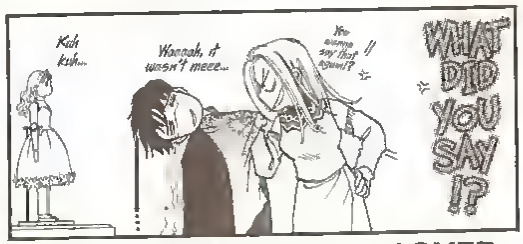
RING SIZE METER
THIS IS A METER FOR MEASURING RING SIZES!
ALL JEWELRY STORES HAVE THEM!!
...I COULD BECOME AN ALCHEMIST, TOO?
SO, YOU'RE SAYING...
BUT YOU WERE GOING TO BEAT ME TO DEATH WITH THAT IRON ROD!
K...KILL YOU!? YOU HAVE THAT ALL WRONG!!
SEE!?
THAT ONE RIGHT THERE!
HAAH...WHEN YOU'VE GOT THIS QUALITY NOW...
SO THEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO KILL ME, RIGHT?
HUH...
I SWEAR, IT IS A BONA FIDE JEWELRY STORE...
Oh. Looking closer, I guess they are all wearing jewelry...
JEWELRY STORE...?
YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS SPOOK HOUSE IS A JEWELRY STORE!?


Y...YES.
PERHAPS...
THE WISE MAN'S STONE CHOOSES ITS MASTER.
SO INSTEAD OF DIGESTING IT, I THINK MAYBE YOU ABSORBED IT.
IF ANYTHING, THE WISE [illegible] CHOSE YOU, I THINK...
YOU SAW THE EVIL POWER OF THE RUBY, RIGHT?
THAT WAS ABSOLUTELY THE POWER OF THE WISE MAN'S STONE.
AND IT'S POSSIBLE THAT YOU WERE USING IT, MIHARU-SAN.
YOU COULD CHECK A DIFFERENT WAY!
AND...WHEN I TOUCHED YOU BEFORE, I FELT IT.

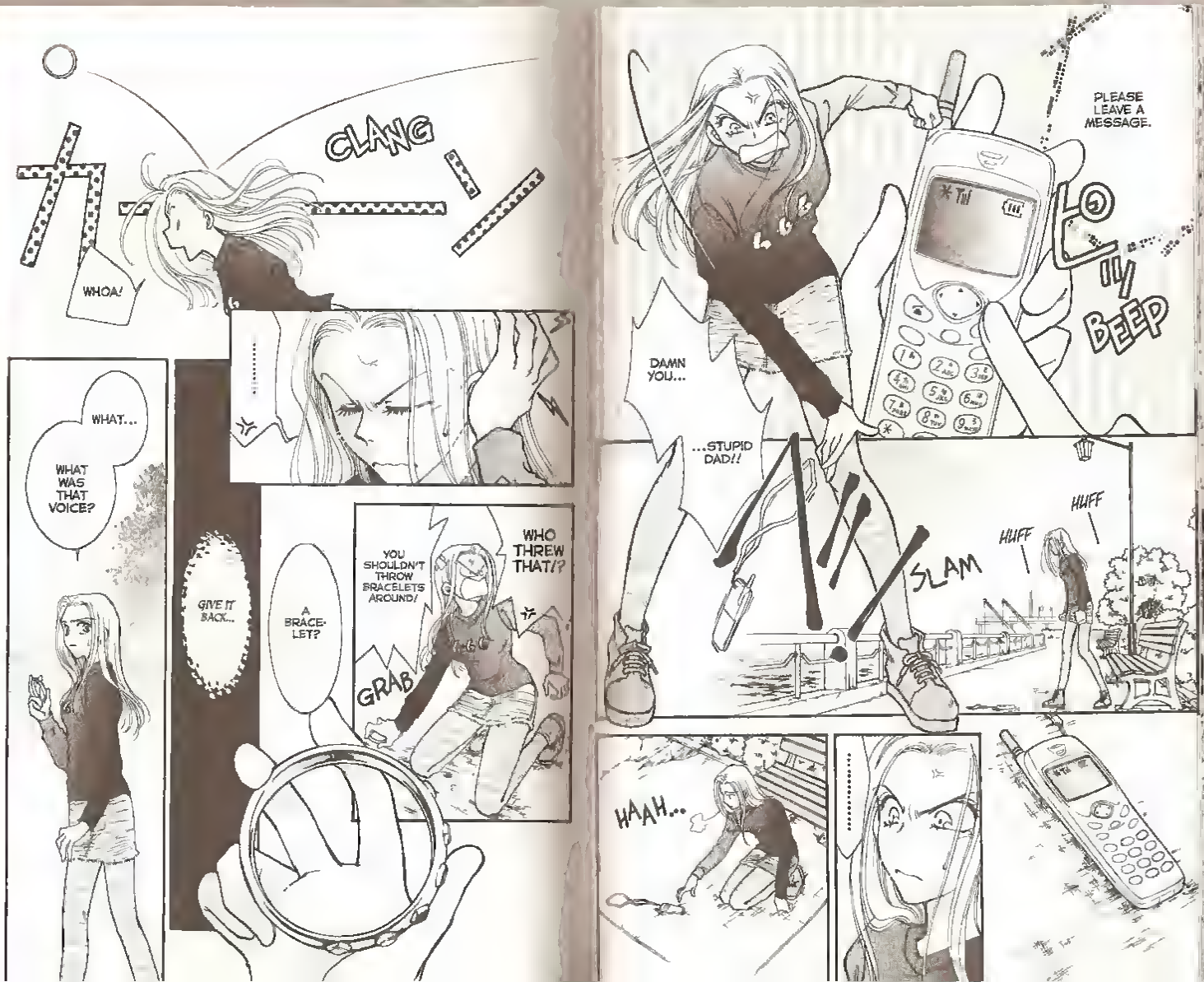
Jewelry File 3

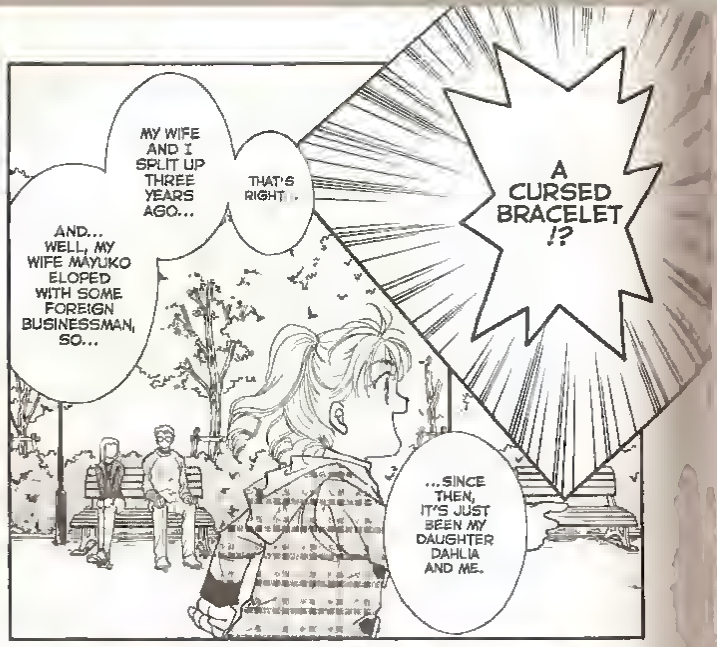
Regard

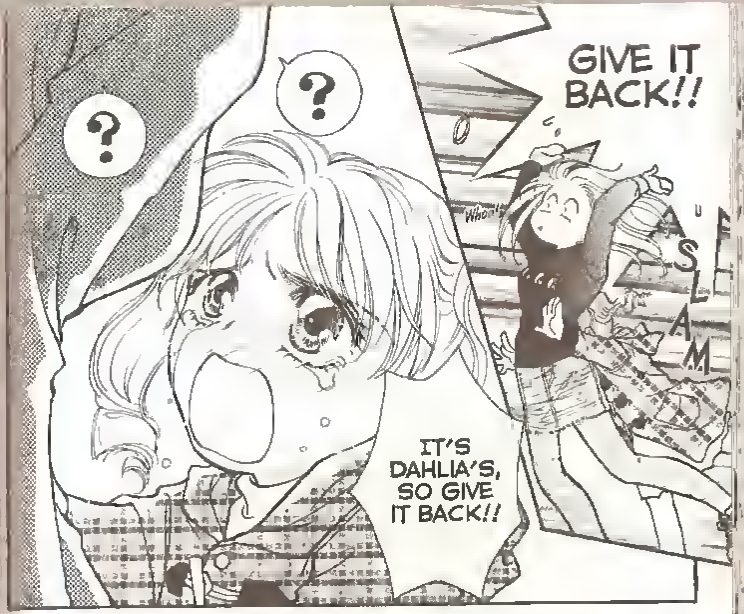

Now that you've erased my debt, it's the least I can do to repay you
I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN DO ANYTHING, BUT...
...FOR NOW, I'LL TRUST THIS WISE MAN'S STONE.
OKAY, I GET IT.
JUST WHAT WE NEED. A REAL HANDFUL.
TCH!

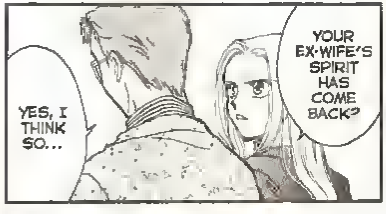


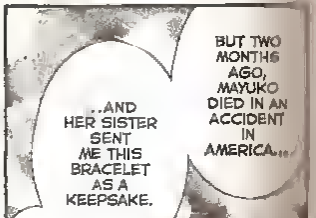
Jewelry File 2 : Garnet / OVER


CLANG
WHOA!
.....
WHAT...
WHAT WAS THAT VOICE?
GIVE IT BACK...
A BRACE-LET?
YOU SHOULDN'T THROW BRACELETS AROUND!
WHO THREW THAT!?
GRAB
PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE.
BEEP
DAMN YOU...
...STUPID DAD!!
SLAM
HUFF
HUFF
HAAH...
.....

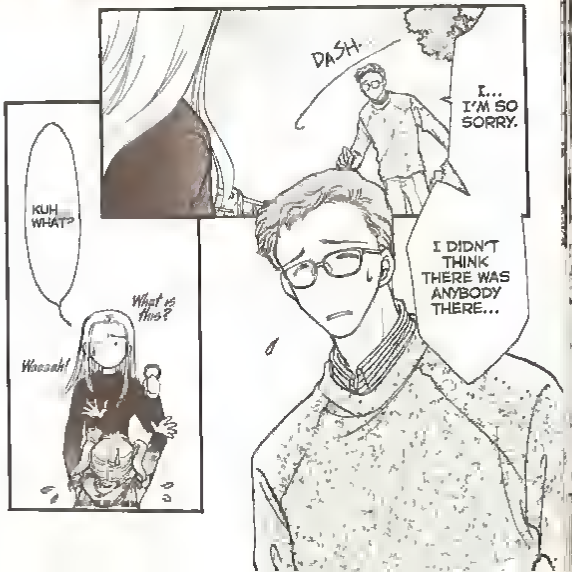

A CURSED BRACELET !?
MY WIFE AND I SPLIT UP THREE YEARS AGO...
THAT'S RIGHT.
AND... WELL, MY WIFE MAYUKO ELOPED WITH SOME FOREIGN BUSINESSMAN, SO...
...SINCE THEN, IT'S JUST BEEN MY DAUGHTER DAHLIA AND ME.


?
?
GIVE IT BACK!!
Whoa!!
DASH
IT'S DAHLIA'S, SO GIVE IT BACK!!

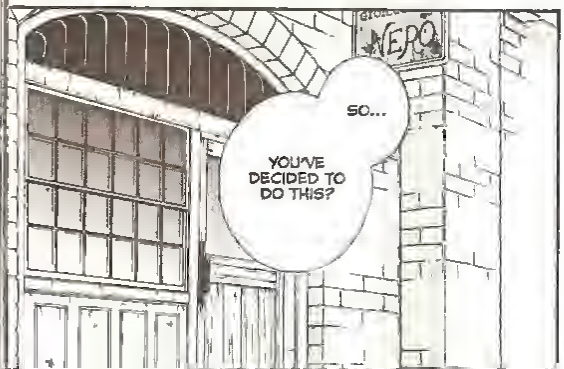

YOUR EX-WIFE'S SPIRIT HAS COME BACK?
YES, I THINK SO...


BUT TWO MONTHS AGO, MAYUKO DIED IN AN ACCIDENT IN AMERICA...
..AND HER SISTER SENT ME THIS BRACELET AS A KEEPSAKE.
EVER SINCE THEN..

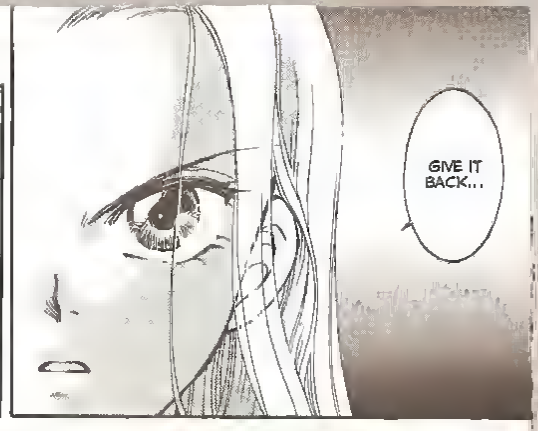
MY DAUGHTER SAYS SHE'S SEEN HER.
AND I'VE BEEN HEARING A VOICE.
A VOICE THAT SOUNDS SO MUCH LIKE MAYUKO'S ...

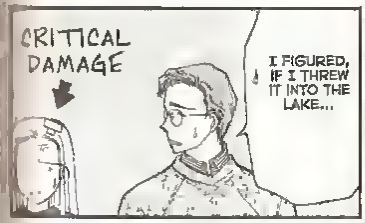

DASH
I... I'M SO SORRY.
I DIDN'T THINK THERE WAS ANYBODY THERE...
KUH WHAT?
What is this?
Waaah!

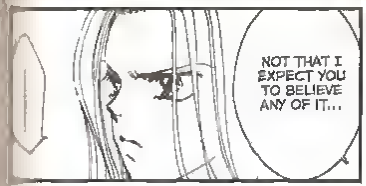
I UNDERSTAND, MATSUBARA-SAN!
I WILL ABSOLUTELY EXTERMINATE THAT BAD SPIRIT FOR YOU, SO PUT YOUR HEART AT EASE!!
TH... THANKS.
...AND ONLY WANT HER DAUGHTER NOW THAT SHE'S LONELY...
TO HAVE LEFT BY HER OWN CHOICE.
IT'S JUST TOO SELFISH!


SO...
YOU'VE DECIDED TO DO THIS?

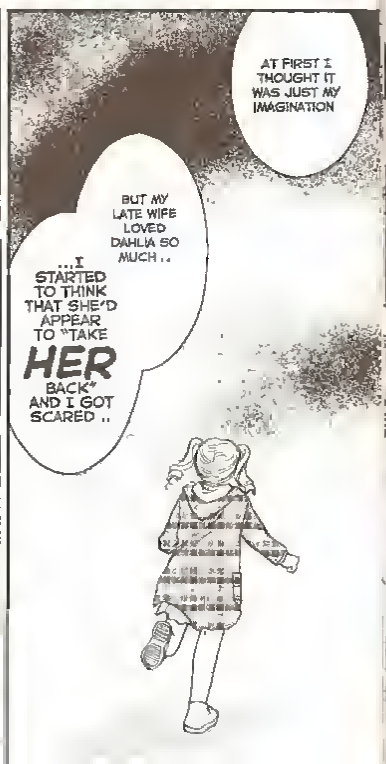
HUH?
YES, THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS.

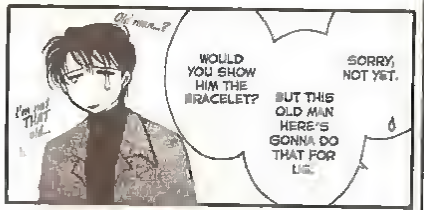

GIVE IT BACK...

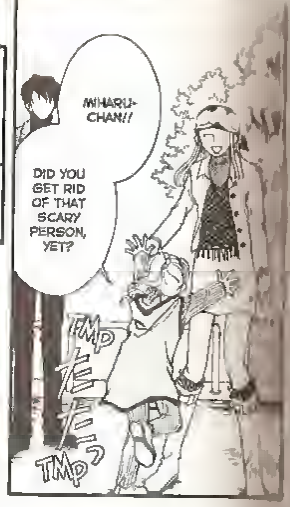

CRITICAL DAMAGE
I FIGURED, IF I THREW IT INTO THE LAKE...

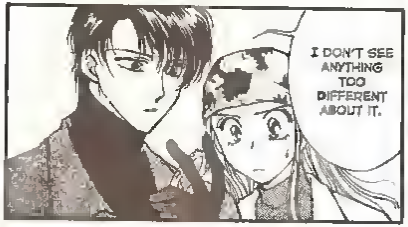

NOT THAT I EXPECT YOU TO BELIEVE ANY OF IT...

NO, I BELIEVE YOU!


AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST MY IMAGINATION
BUT MY LATE WIFE LOVED DAHLIA SO MUCH..
...I STARTED TO THINK THAT SHE'D APPEAR TO "TAKE HER BACK" AND I GOT SCARED..


Oh, man...?
I'm not THAT old...
WOULD YOU SHOW HIM THE BRACELET?
SORRY, NOT YET.
BUT THIS OLD MAN HERE'S GONNA DO THAT FOR US.


MHARU-CHAN!!
DID YOU GET RID OF THAT SCARY PERSON, YET?
TMD
TMD

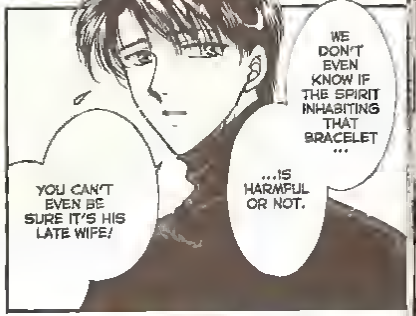

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING TOO DIFFERENT ABOUT IT.

LOOK AT THIS.
HEY...
WHY ARE THE SIX STONES ALL DIFFERENT SHAPES AND COLORS?

AH, MAYBE IT'S A "REGARD."
REGARD?

AND IT'S GOT GARNET AND LAPIS...
KIND OF CHEAP FOR A RICH GUY'S WIFE...

DON'T DRAG ME IN.
She's gonna get herself in trouble, right Beatrice?
GET A BACKBONE AND HELP ME.
YOU HARDLY EVEN INVESTIGATED...
WHY NOT?
YOU SAID THAT EXORCISING POSSESSIVE SPIRITS FROM STONES IS PART OF OUR JOB

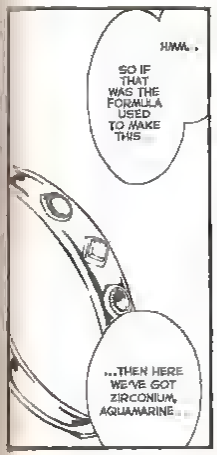

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THE SPIRIT INHABITING THAT BRACELET ...
...IS HARMFUL OR NOT.
YOU CAN'T EVEN BE SURE IT'S HIS LATE WIFE!

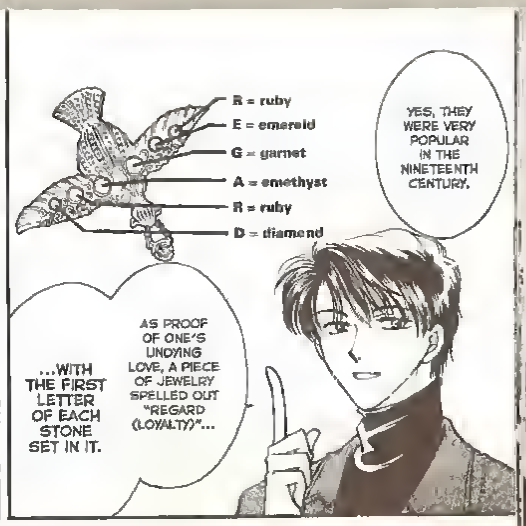
HEY, DAHLIA-CHAN!

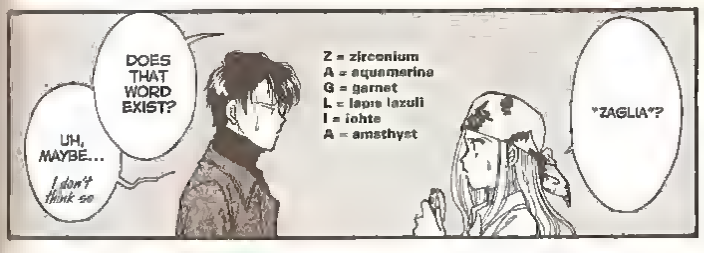
.....

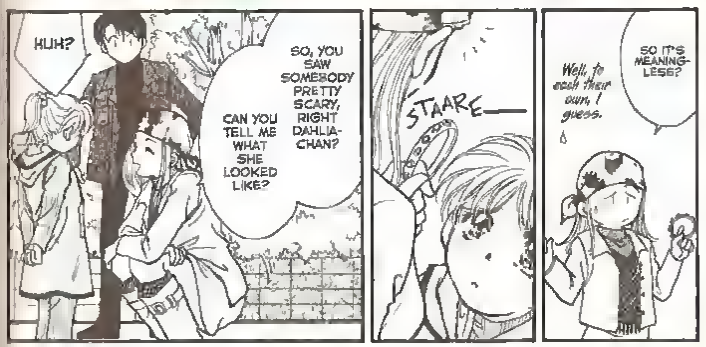
FINE. IF I PROVE THAT IT'S HIS EX-WIFE, WILL YOU EXORCISE IT FOR ME?

DAHLIA CAN'T POSSIBLY RECALL THE FACE OF SOMEONE WHO DIED WHEN SHE WAS THREE.
NO FACE...
YOU JERK!!
KICK
I MEAN, MAYBE SHE LOOKED LIKE HER...?
SHE'S DAHLIA-CHAN'S ONE AND ONLY MOM, YOU KNOW!!
Hush...
HUH?
SHE HAD NO HEAD...


HMM...
SO IF THAT WAS THE FORMULA USED TO MAKE THIS
...THEN HERE WE'VE GOT ZIRCONIUM, AQUAMARINE...


R = ruby
E = emerald
G = garnet
A = amethyst
R = ruby
D = diamond
YES, THEY WERE VERY POPULAR IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.
AS PROOF OF ONE'S UNDYING LOVE, A PIECE OF JEWELRY SPELLED OUT "REGARD (LOYALTY)"...
...WITH THE FIRST LETTER OF EACH STONE SET IN IT.


DOES THAT WORD EXIST?
UH, MAYBE...
I don't think so
Z = zirconium
A = aquamarine
G = garnet
L = lapis lazuli
I = iohte
A = amsthyst
"ZAGLIA"?

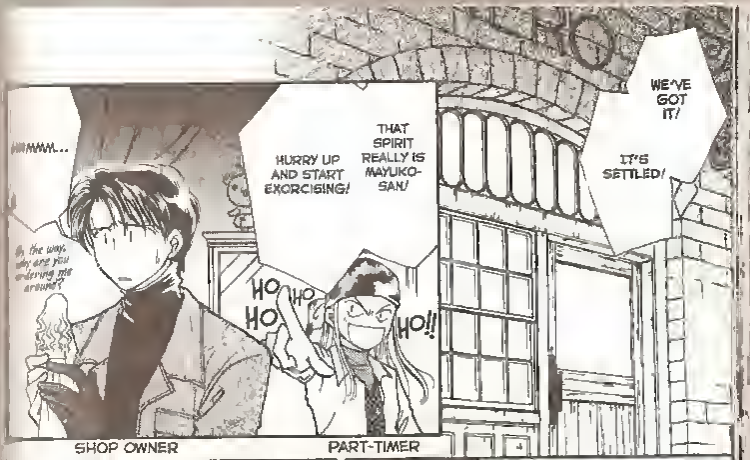

HUH?
SO, YOU SAW SOMEBODY PRETTY SCARY, RIGHT DAHLIA-CHAN?
CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT SHE LOOKED LIKE?
STAARE—
Well, to each their own, I guess.
SO IT'S MEANING-LESS?

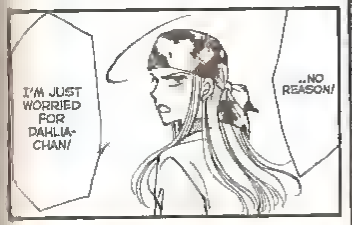
A TRAIN WRECK TOOK MAYUKO'S LIFE.
IT WAS A HORRIBLE ACCIDENT.
IS THERE SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW?
I SENT IT MYSELF.
BUT IF MAYUKO'S SPIRIT'S STILL LINGERING AROUND IT, SHOULDN'T YOU GET RID OF IT?
SO AWFUL THAT HER BODY COULD BARELY BE IDENTIFIED.
IT WAS NEVER COMPLETELY RECOVERED.

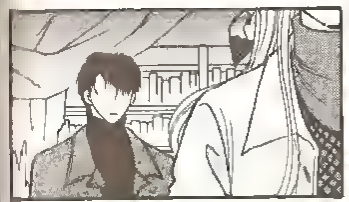
NEVER...
...COMPLETELY RECOVERED?
GULP
THAT'S RIGHT. LIKE HER HEAD...

I KNOW!
LET'S ASK MAYUKO-SAN'S OLDER SISTER, WHO GAVE THEM THE BRACELET IN THE FIRST PLACE!
UUUUUH!
I...I'M EVEN MORE LOST THAN I WAS BEFORE...
HEADLESS
MAYUKO'S SPIRIT!?
IS THAT SO...
YES...
WELL, WE THINK SO.

OKAY, IF YOU COULD PLEASE LEAVE THIS WITH ME.
YOU'D BETTER GIVE IT BACK, YOU HEAR!
IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO MY MOMMY!
Y...
YEAH...
I'll handle it with care.
CLUNK
AH!
HUH? OKAY...
GASP
PLEASE HOLD THIS FOR ME, MIHARU-SAN.
Thank you.

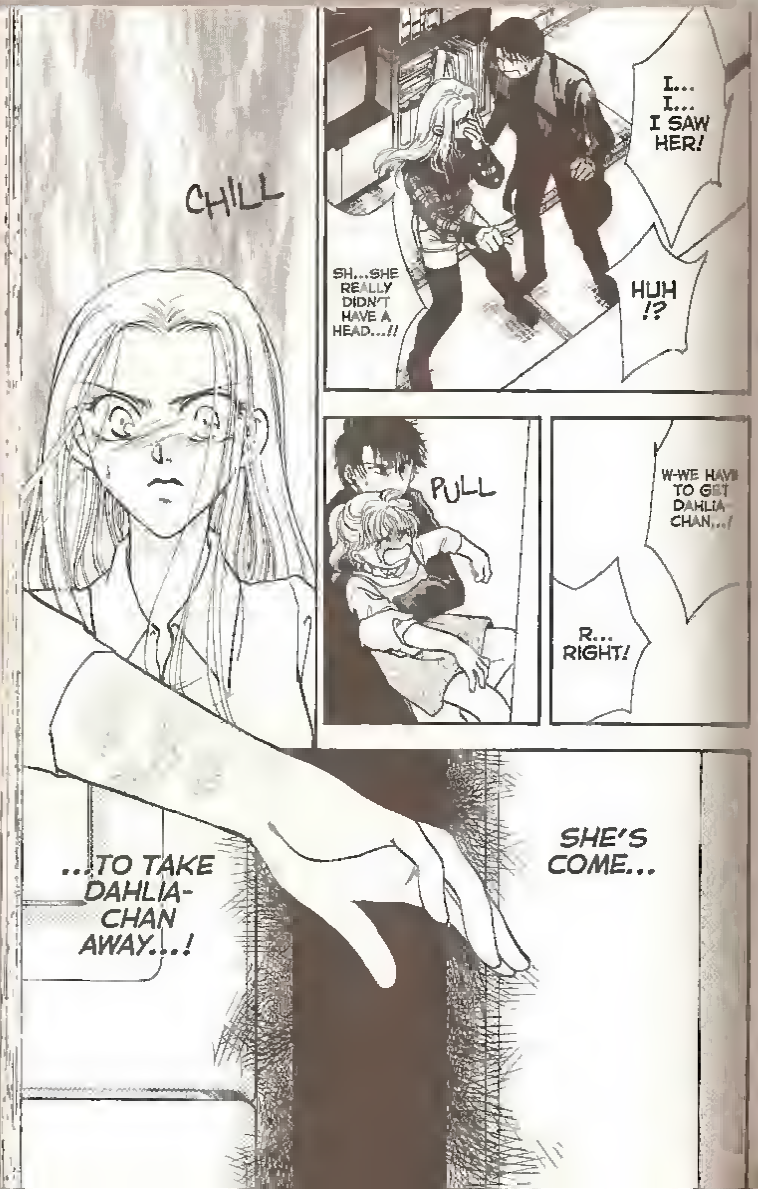

WE'VE GOT IT!
IT'S SETTLED!
THAT SPIRIT REALLY IS MAYUKO-SAN!
HURRY UP AND START EXORCISING!
MMMM...
By the way, why are you observing me around?
HO HO HO!!
SHOP OWNER
PART-TIMER


I'M JUST WORRIED FOR DAHLIA-CHAN!
..NO REASON!

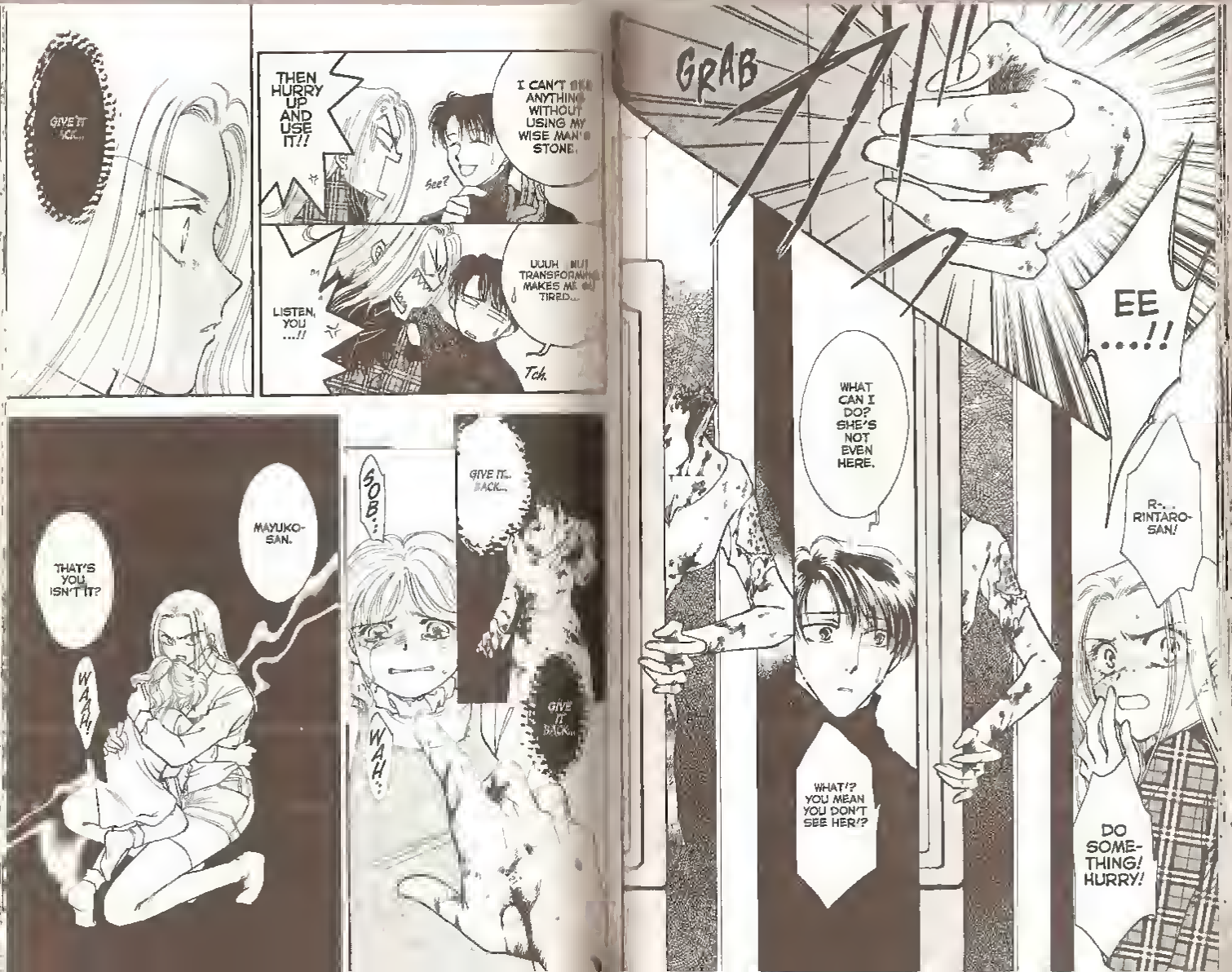


MIHARU-SAN, WHY DO YOU WANT TO EXORCISE THE SPIRIT SO BADLY?

Thanks very much.
I'LL GET IT FOR YOU–
OH CRAP... SORRY.
ROLL
I CAN'T REACH IT...
AAAW.
YANK
EEK!
!?
DAHLIA-CHAN !?
SOME-BODY'S GRAB-BING IT...
MY... MY HAND ...
HUH !?
HOW COULD SOMEBODY BE BEHIND TH--

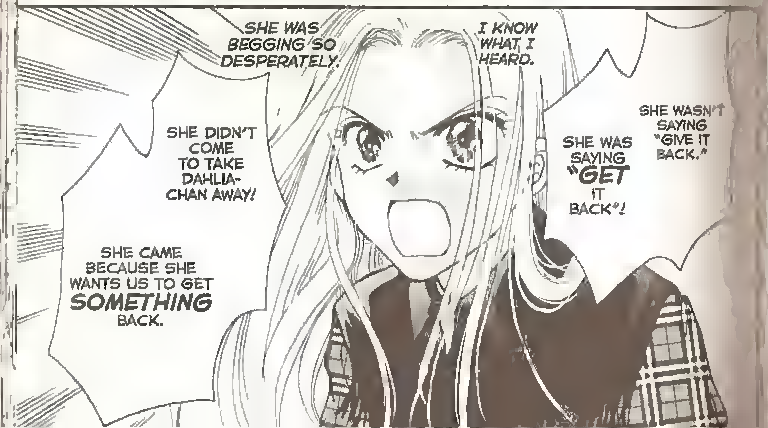

CHILL
I... I... I SAW HER!
SH...SHE REALLY DIDN'T HAVE A HEAD...!!
HUH !?
PULL
W-WE HAVE TO GET DAHLIA-CHAN...!
R... RIGHT!
...TO TAKE DAHLIA-CHAN AWAY...!
SHE'S COME...

JUMP
EEEK !!

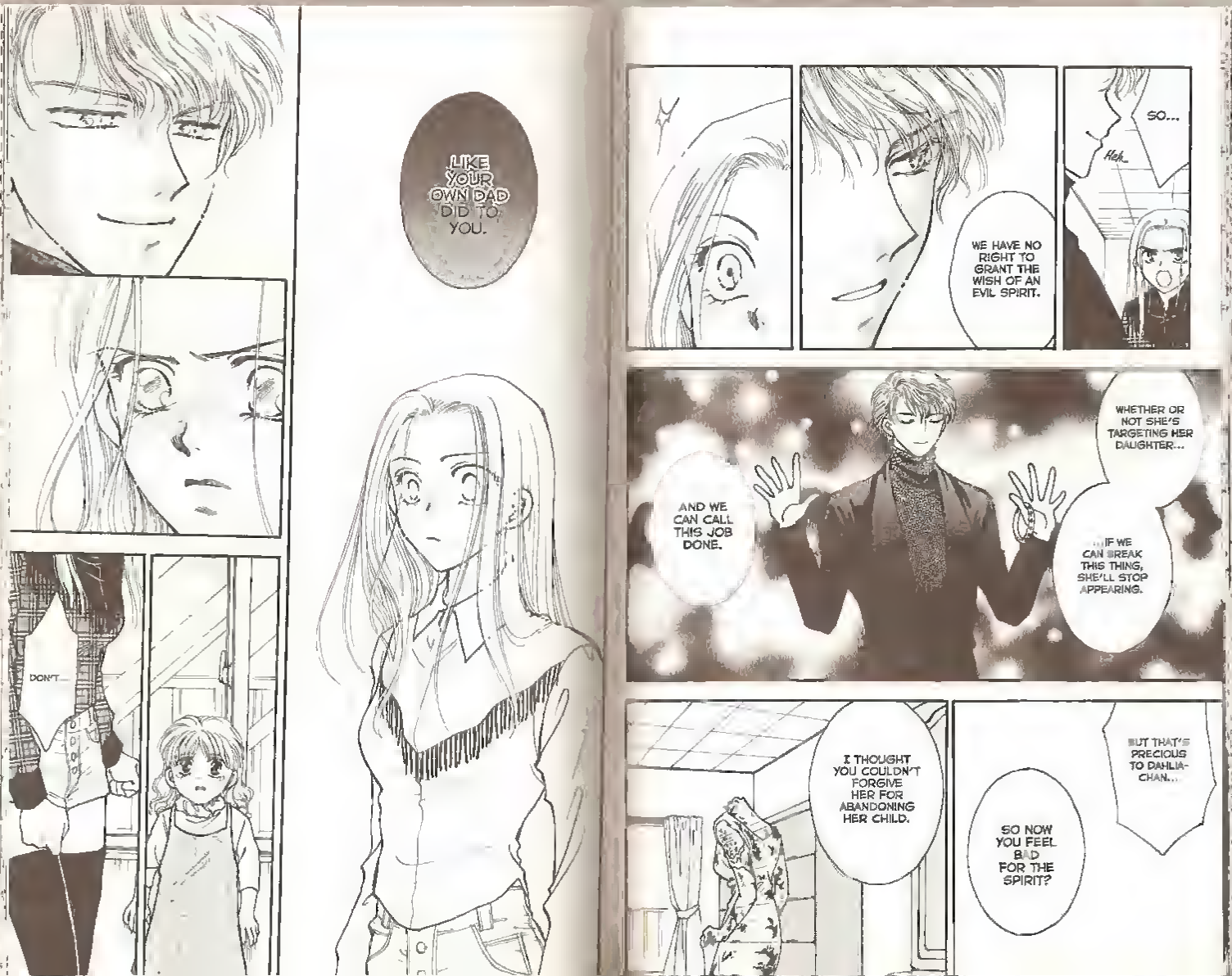

GRAB
EE...!!
R-... RINTARO-SAN!
DO SOME-THING! HURRY!
WHAT CAN I DO? SHE'S NOT EVEN HERE.
WHAT!? YOU MEAN YOU DON'T SEE HER!?
GIVE IT BACK...
THEN HURRY UP AND USE IT!!
I CAN'T USE ANYTHING WITHOUT USING MY WISE MAN'S STONE.
See?
LISTEN, YOU ...!!
UUUH BUT TRANSFORMING MAKES ME SO TIRED...
Tch.
SOB...
GIVE IT... BACK...
WAH...
GIVE IT BACK...
MAYUKO-SAN.
THAT'S YOU, ISN'T IT?
WAAH!

NO ...!
FWIP
GET IT BACK.
HUH!?
A... AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO LEFT!?
IT'S TOO SELFISH OF YOU TO WANT HER BACK NOW!
GIVE IT... B. CK.
GIVE IT BACK...
RINTARO-SAN, HURRY!!
GIVE IT BACK...
GLOW
GUESS I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE...
HAAH...

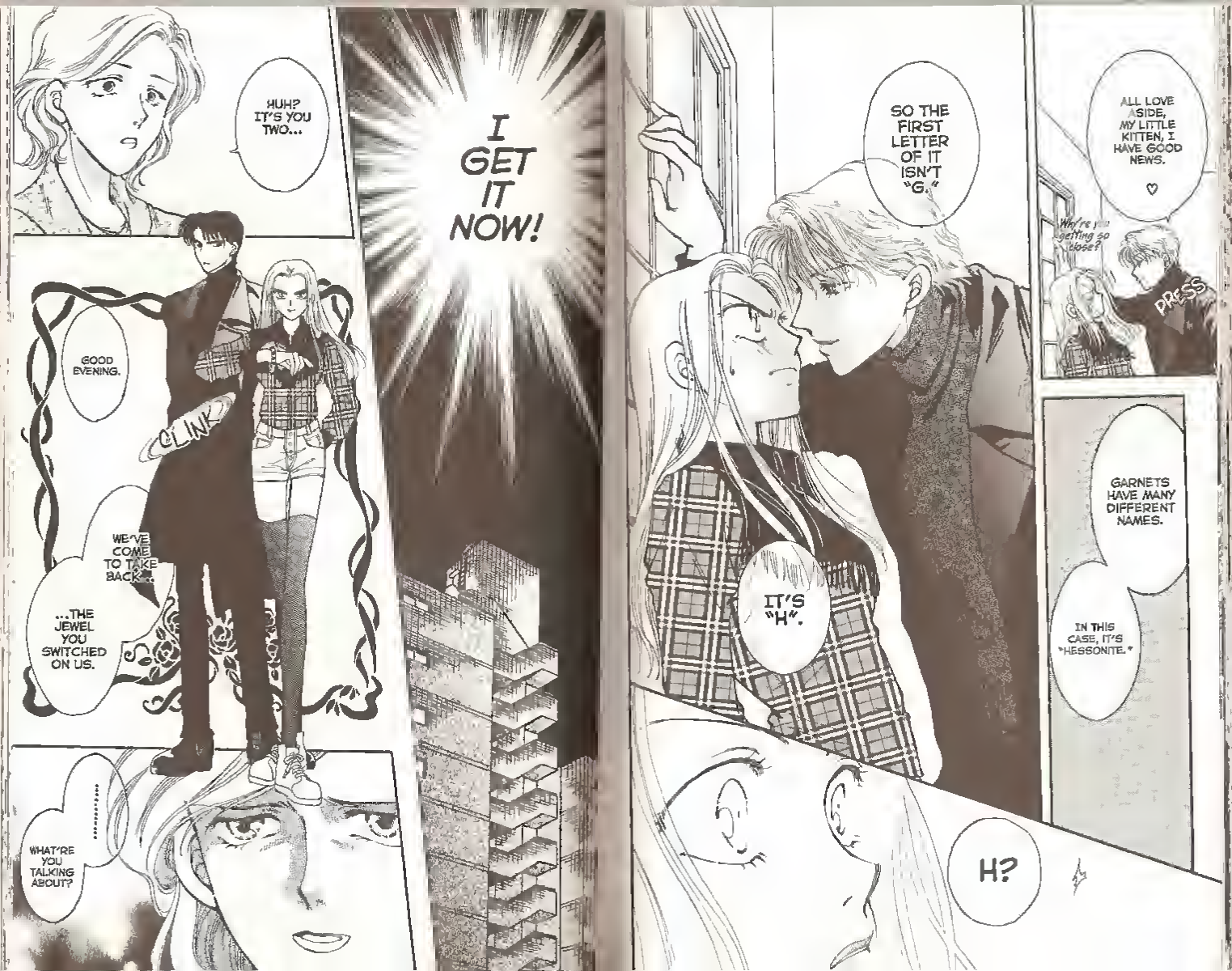
WAIT A MINUTE!!
BLOCK
STOP RIGHT THERE, YOU CREEPY ALCHEMIST!!
BUT NOT IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN, DEAR! ♡
WELL, YOU'RE MORE DARING THAN I THOUGHT, HONEY! ♡
Just a little maybe.

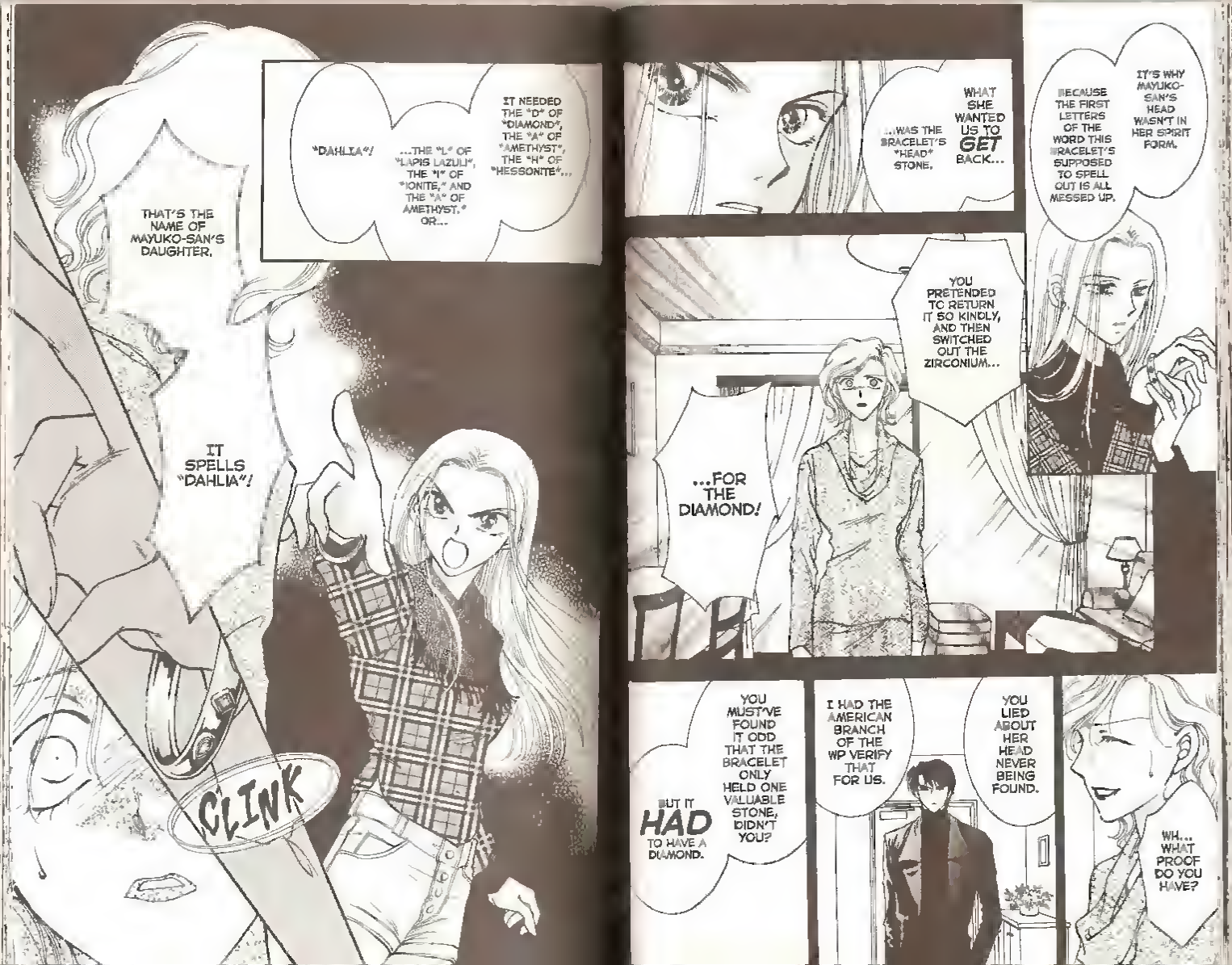

SHE WAS BEGGING SO DESPERATELY.
I KNOW WHAT I HEARD.
SHE DIDN'T COME TO TAKE DAHLIA-CHAN AWAY!
SHE WAS SAYING "GET IT BACK"!
SHE WASN'T SAYING "GIVE IT BACK."
SHE CAME BECAUSE SHE WANTS US TO GET SOMETHING BACK.

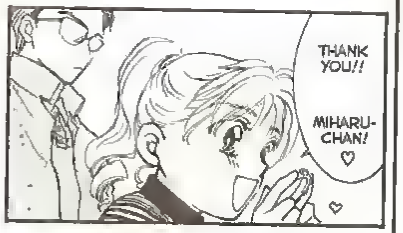
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, LADY.
GLOW
WAI...!
CRACK
IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE CALLING PEOPLE OVER TO THE UNDERWORLD
AT LEAST LOOK GOOD DOING IT


LIKE YOUR OWN DAD DID TO YOU.
DON'T...
WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO GRANT THE WISH OF AN EVIL SPIRIT.
SO...
Heh.
WHETHER OR NOT SHE'S TARGETING HER DAUGHTER...
AND WE CAN CALL THIS JOB DONE.
...IF WE CAN BREAK THIS THING, SHE'LL STOP APPEARING.
I THOUGHT YOU COULDN'T FORGIVE HER FOR ABANDONING HER CHILD.
BUT THAT'S PRECIOUS TO DAHLIA-CHAN...
SO NOW YOU FEEL BAD FOR THE SPIRIT?

SLUG
DON'T YOU DARE MOCK ME!!
NO, I HAVEN'T FORGIVEN MY DAD FOR ABANDONING ME!
BUT HE'S STILL ALIVE!!
GLARE
M...My face. My beautiful face. She... struck it.
SO...
THERE'S STILL A CHANCE FOR ME TO FORGIVE HIM.
THIS IS MAYUKO-SAN'S ONLY CHANCE!
...SINCE WE'VE HEARD HER VOICE...
...WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR WHATEVER IT IS SHE'S TALKING ABOUT!
HUH!?
SO THAT PUNCH WAS A LOVE TAP, RIGHT? ♡

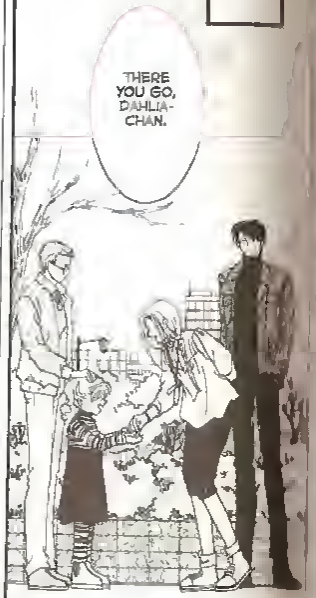

HUH? IT'S YOU TWO...
I GET IT NOW!
GOOD EVENING.
CLINK
WE'VE COME TO TAKE BACK...
...THE JEWEL YOU SWITCHED ON US.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
.....
SO THE FIRST LETTER OF IT ISN'T "G."
IT'S "H".
H?
ALL LOVE ASIDE, MY LITTLE KITTEN, I HAVE GOOD NEWS.
♡
Why're you getting so close?
PRESS
GARNETS HAVE MANY DIFFERENT NAMES.
IN THIS CASE, IT'S "HESSONITE."


THAT'S THE NAME OF MAYUKO-SAN'S DAUGHTER.
IT SPELLS "DAHLIA"!
CLINK
"DAHLIA"!
...THE "L" OF "LAPIS LAZULI", THE "I" OF "IONITE," AND THE "A" OF AMETHYST." OR...
IT NEEDED THE "D" OF "DIAMOND", THE "A" OF "AMETHYST", THE "H" OF "HESSONITE"...
...WAS THE BRACELET'S "HEAD" STONE.
WHAT SHE WANTED US TO GET BACK...
BECAUSE THE FIRST LETTERS OF THE WORD THIS BRACELET'S SUPPOSED TO SPELL OUT IS ALL MESSED UP.
IT'S WHY MAYUKO-SAN'S HEAD WASN'T IN HER SPIRIT FORM.
YOU PRETENDED TO RETURN IT SO KINDLY, AND THEN SWITCHED OUT THE ZIRCONIUM...
...FOR THE DIAMOND!
BUT IT HAD TO HAVE A DIAMOND.
YOU MUST'VE FOUND IT ODD THAT THE BRACELET ONLY HELD ONE VALUABLE STONE, DIDN'T YOU?
I HAD THE AMERICAN BRANCH OF THE WP VERIFY THAT FOR US.
YOU LIED ABOUT HER HEAD NEVER BEING FOUND.
WH... WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE?


THANK YOU!!
MIHARU-CHAN!

WAFT

MA... YUKO.

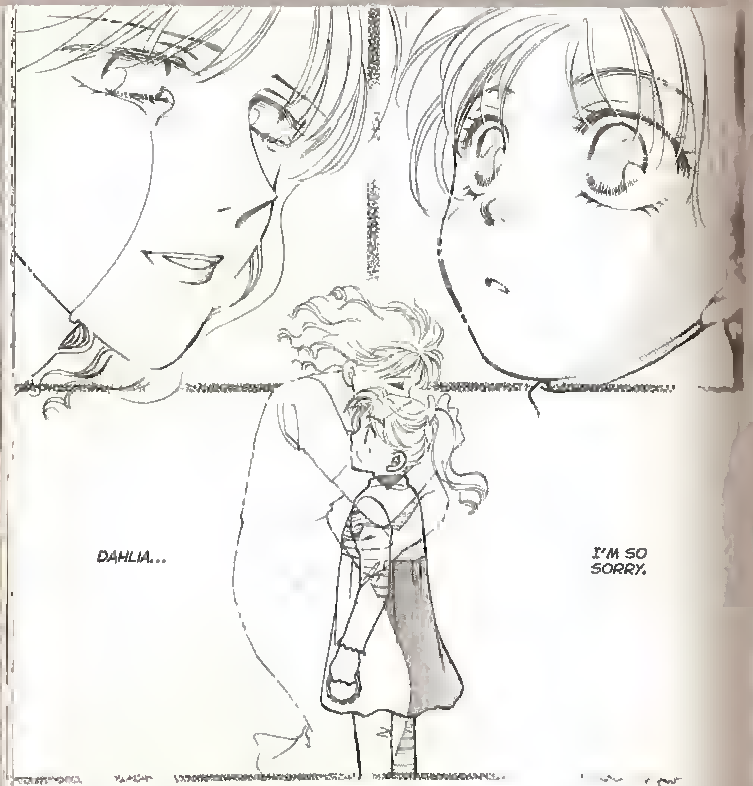

THERE YOU GO, DAHLIA-CHAN.

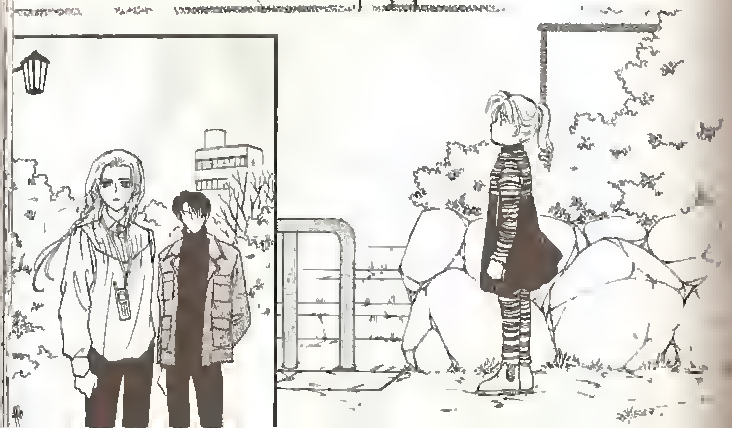
GIVE IT BACK...
EE ...!
AH ...

GIVE IT... BACK.

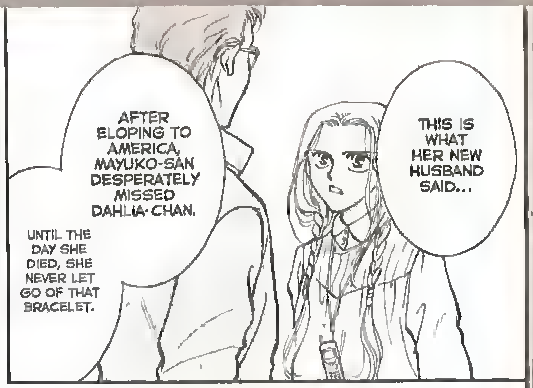
I'M SORRY, MAYUKO ...
FOR-GIVE ME...
AAAH!

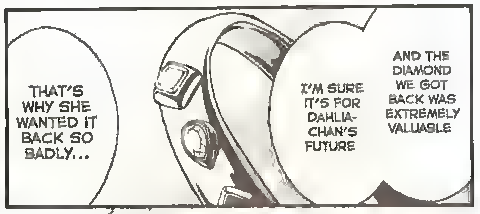
B... BUT HOW COULD YOU GIVE A DIAMOND TO A CHILD...!?
I... I'VE GOT DEBTS TO PAY, YOU KNOW ...!

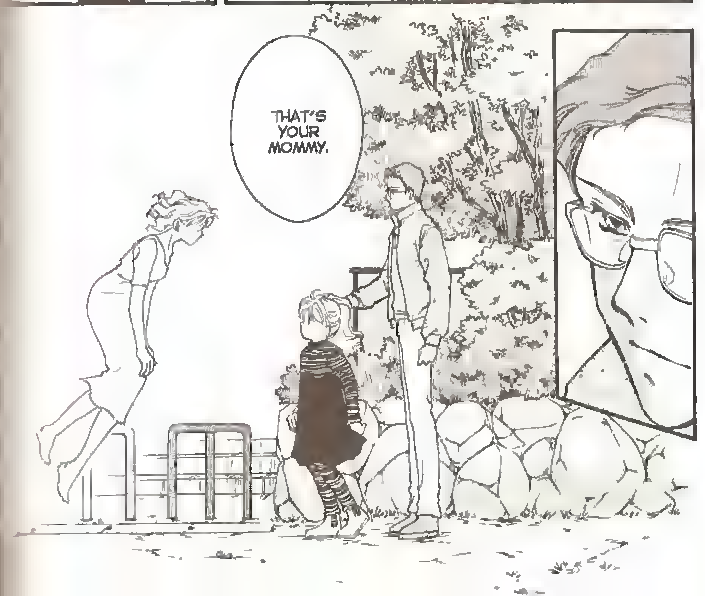

DAHLIA...
I'M SO SORRY.



WHO IS THAT?
GRIP

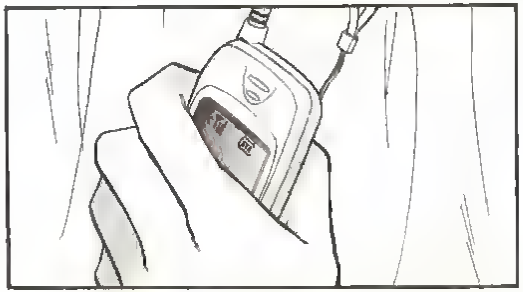

AFTER ELOPING TO AMERICA, MAYUKO-SAN DESPERATELY MISSED DAHLIA-CHAN.
UNTIL THE DAY SHE DIED, SHE NEVER LET GO OF THAT BRACELET.
THIS IS WHAT HER NEW HUSBAND SAID...


THAT'S WHY SHE WANTED IT BACK SO BADLY...
I'M SURE IT'S FOR DAHLIA-CHAN'S FUTURE
AND THE DIAMOND WE GOT BACK WAS EXTREMELY VALUABLE

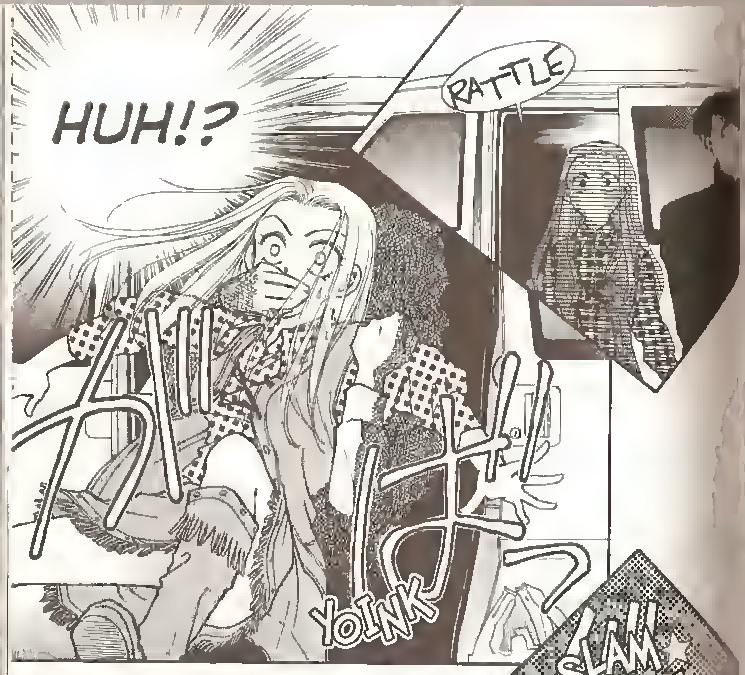

THAT'S YOUR MOMMY.

Jewelry File 4

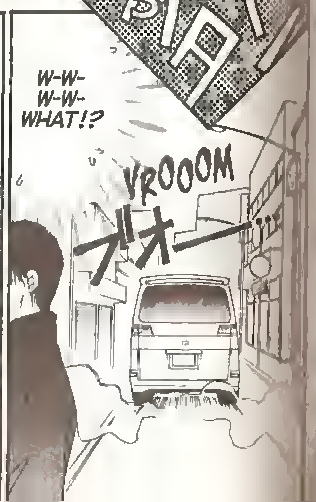
Bloodstone

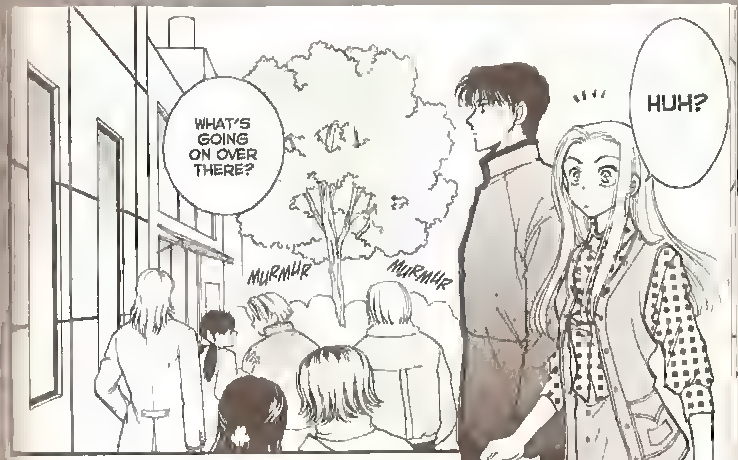


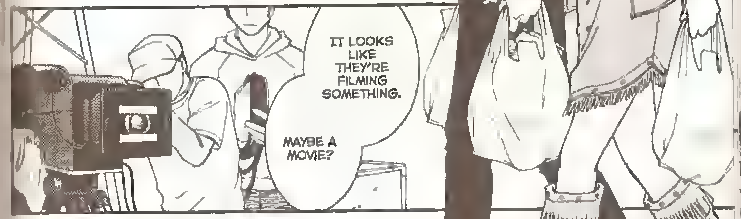
Jewelry File 3 : Regard / OVER


HUH!?
RATTLE
AHHH
YOINK
SLAM!

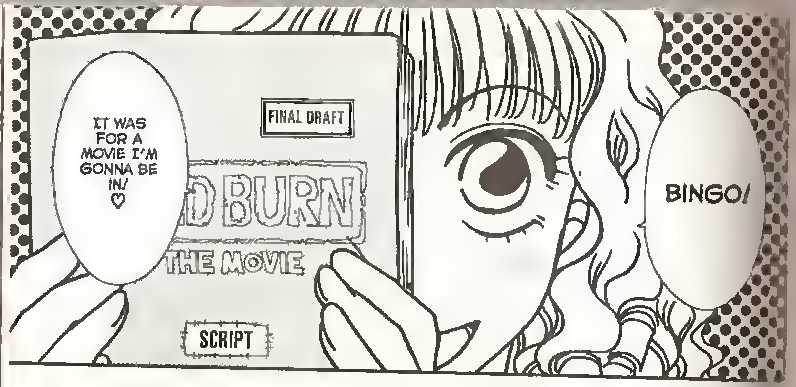
EEEK! EEEEEK!!
IF YOU'RE KIDNAPPING ME...
...YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT NO ONE WILL PAY A PENNY TO GET ME BACK. UNDERSTAND!?

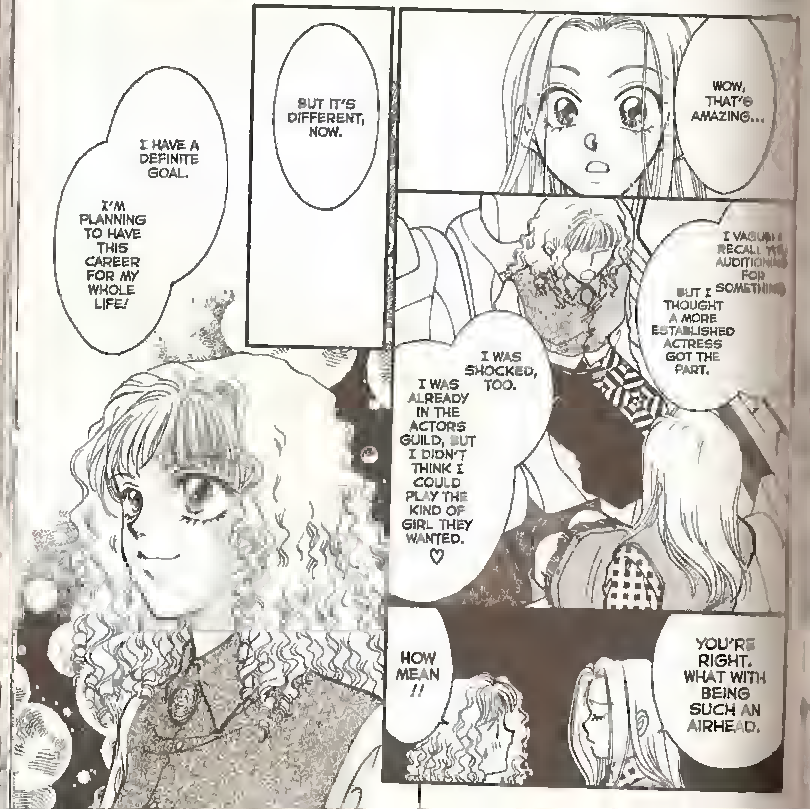

W-W-W-W-WHAT!?
VROOOM
ブオーン

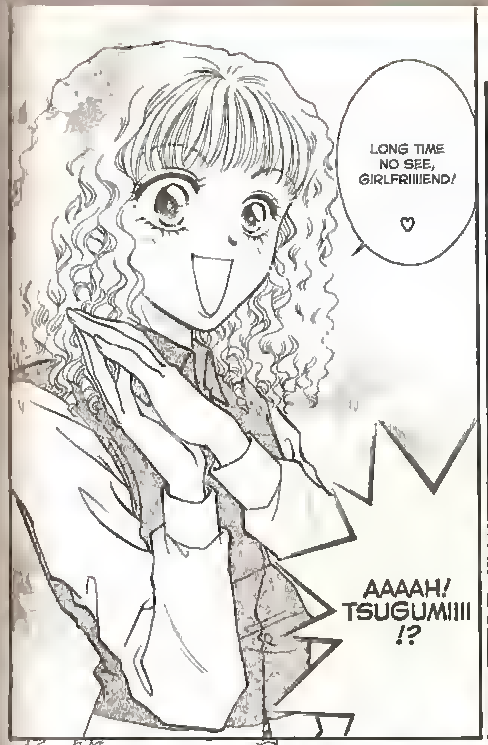

WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?
MURMUR
MURMUR
HUH?

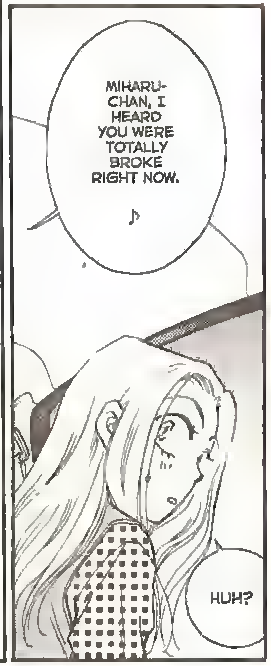

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE FILMING SOMETHING.
MAYBE A MOVIE?

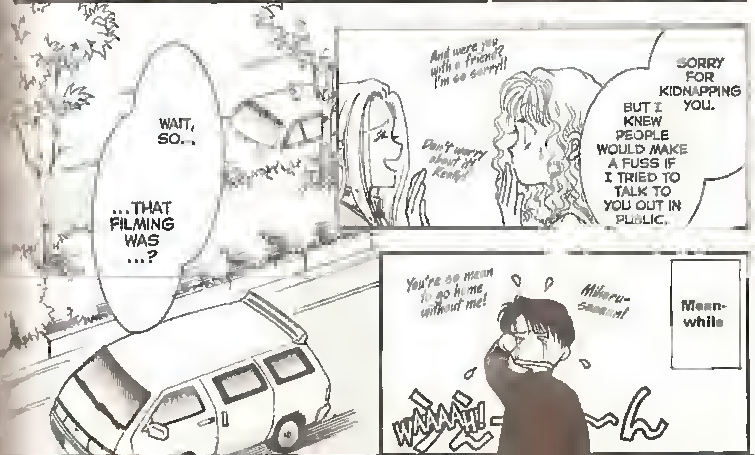
VROOOM
ブロロロ...
WHOA. THAT'S A PRETTY INTENSE SCENE. . .
MUST'VE COST A FORTUNE.


IT WAS FOR A MOVIE I'M GONNA BE IN! ♡
FINAL DRAFT
D BURN
THE MOVIE
SCRIPT
BINGO!

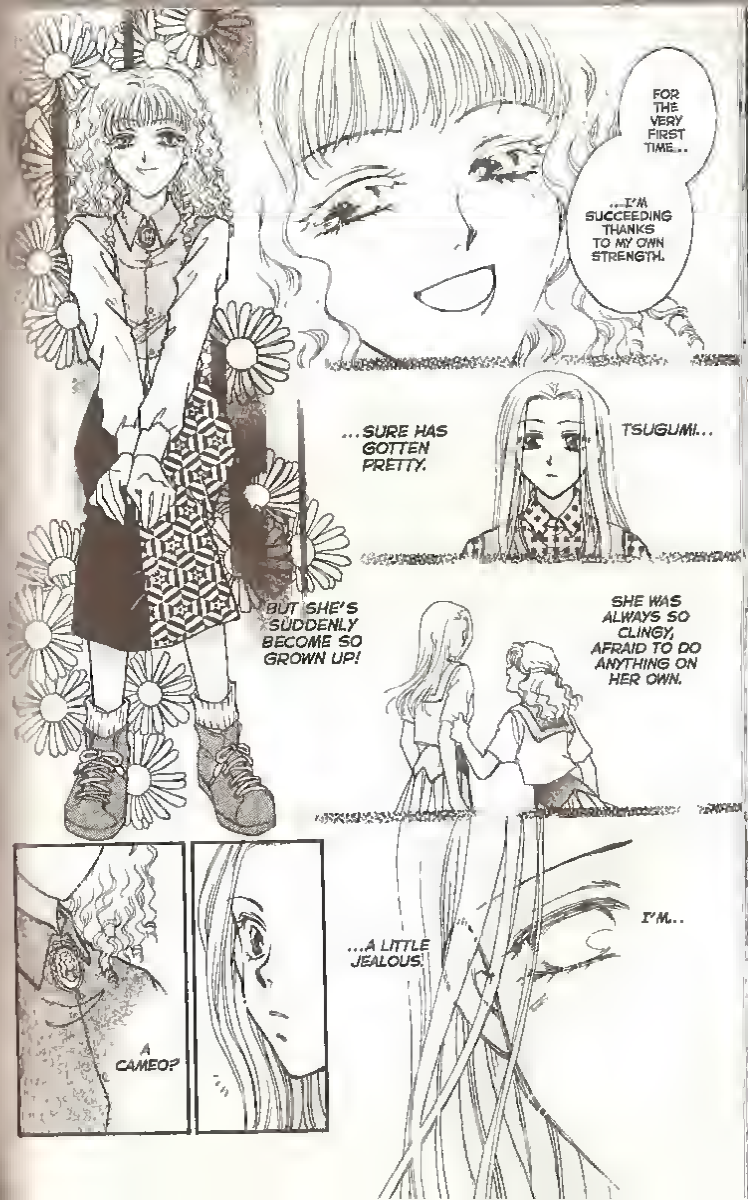

I HAVE A DEFINITE GOAL.
I'M PLANNING TO HAVE THIS CAREER FOR MY WHOLE LIFE!
BUT IT'S DIFFERENT, NOW.
WOW, THAT'S AMAZING...
I VAGUELY RECALL YOU AUDITIONING FOR SOMETHING
BUT I THOUGHT A MORE ESTABLISHED ACTRESS GOT THE PART.
I WAS SHOCKED, TOO.
I WAS ALREADY IN THE ACTORS GUILD, BUT I DIDN'T THINK I COULD PLAY THE KIND OF GIRL THEY WANTED. ♡
HOW MEAN !!
YOU'RE RIGHT. WHAT WITH BEING SUCH AN AIRHEAD.


LONG TIME NO SEE, GIRLFRIIIIEND! ♡
AAAAH! TSUGUMI!!!!!?

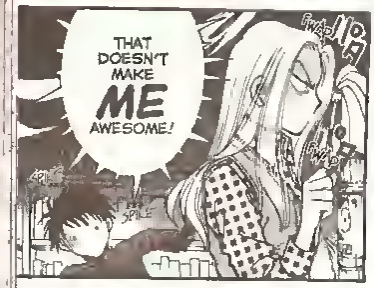

MIHARU-CHAN, I HEARD YOU WERE TOTALLY BROKE RIGHT NOW. ♪
HUH?


WAIT, SO...
...THAT FILMING WAS ...?
And were you with a friend? I'm so sorry!!
Don't worry about it Kenji!
SORRY FOR KIDNAPPING YOU.
BUT I KNEW PEOPLE WOULD MAKE A FUSS IF I TRIED TO TALK TO YOU OUT IN PUBLIC.
You're so mean to go home without me!
Miharu-saaan!
Mean-while
WAAAH!!

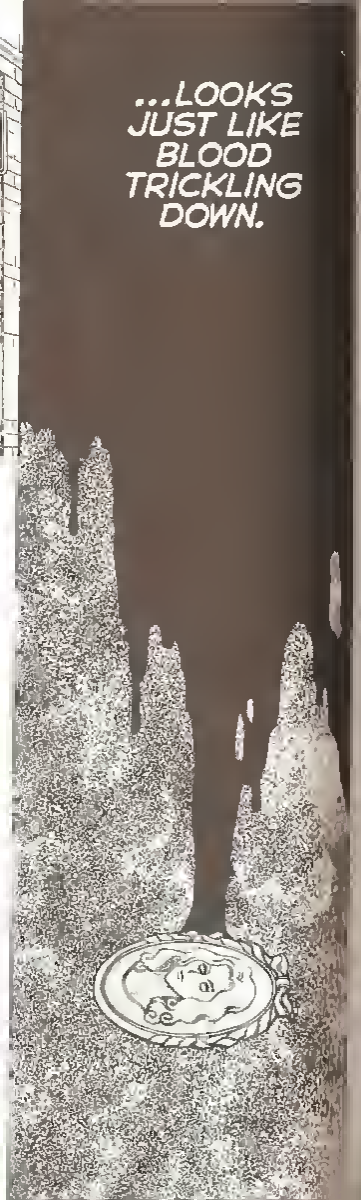
GLARE
OH, THIS?
TSUGUMI ...
WHAT'S THAT CAMEO ...?
DID SHE JUST GLARE AT ME!?
EVEN THOUGH I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE IN THAT STUFF...
I think it's carved from bloodstone
I GOT IT FROM A SEMPAI IN THE ACTORS GUILD.
SHE SAID IT'S A GOOD LUCK CHARM. ♡
...A SEMPAI WHO TOOK GREAT CARE OF ME. .
...LOOKED JUST LIKE THE WOMAN IN THE CAMEO.
CHILL


FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME...
...I'M SUCCEEDING THANKS TO MY OWN STRENGTH.
...SURE HAS GOTTEN PRETTY.
TSUGUMI...
BUT SHE'S SUDDENLY BECOME SO GROWN UP!
SHE WAS ALWAYS SO CLINGY, AFRAID TO DO ANYTHING ON HER OWN.
A CAMEO?
...A LITTLE JEALOUS.
I'M...

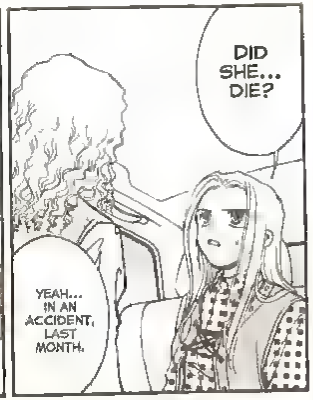
GIORELLI
NERO
YOU DON'T SAY.
YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH THE TSUGUMI KUNUKI?
THAT'S AWESOME!

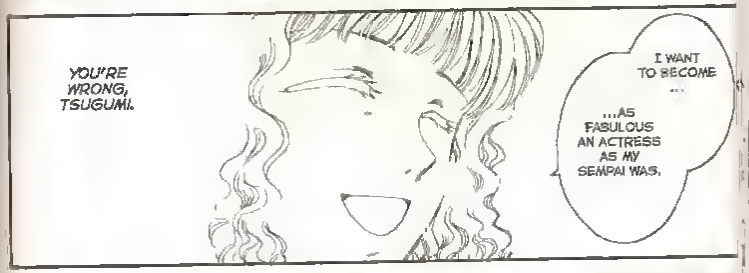

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME AWESOME!

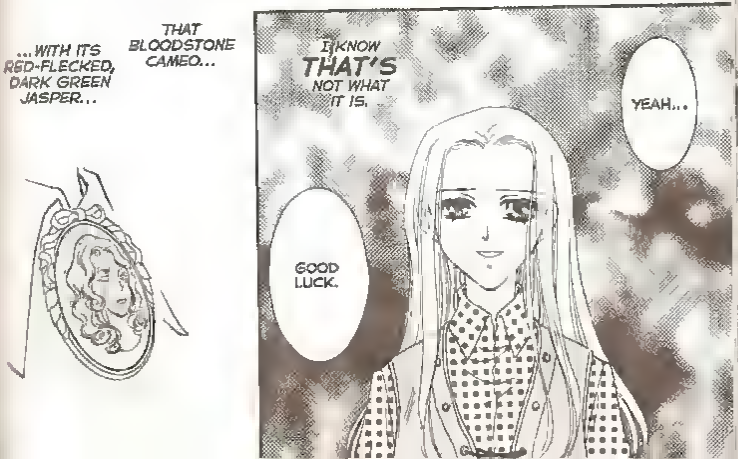
Y... YEAH,
BUT...

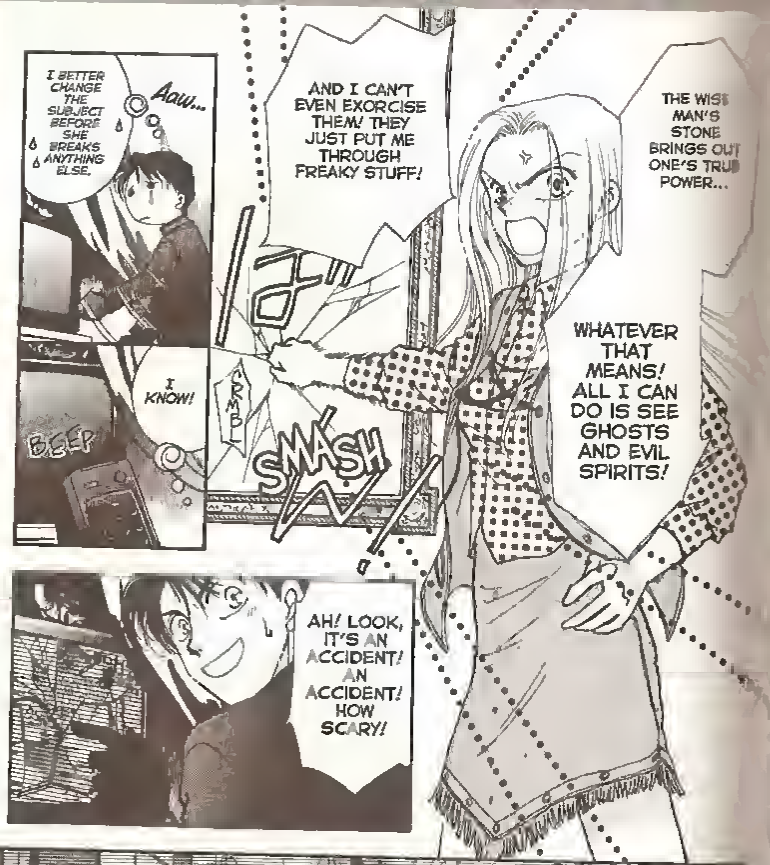

...LOOKS JUST LIKE BLOOD TRICKLING DOWN.

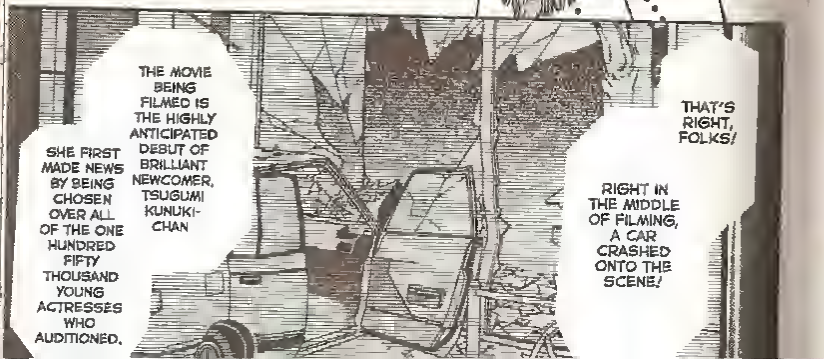
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...
...WHEN I WEAR IT, I FEEL LIKE RISA-SEMPAI'S CHEERING ME ON.

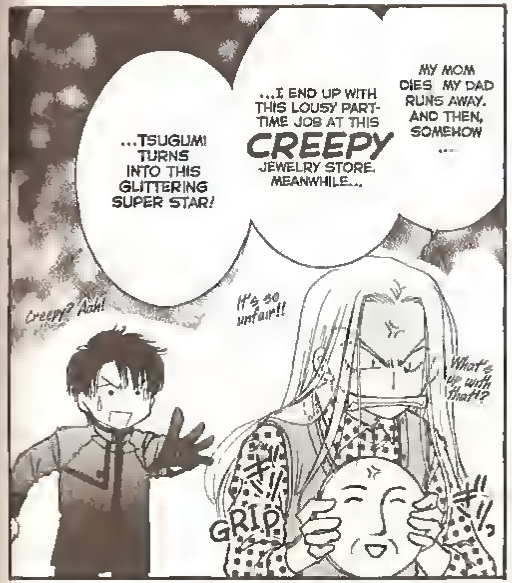

DID SHE... DIE?
YEAH... IN AN ACCIDENT, LAST MONTH.


YOU'RE WRONG, TSUGUMI.
I WANT TO BECOME ...
...AS FABULOUS AN ACTRESS AS MY SEMPAI WAS.


...WITH ITS RED-FLECKED, DARK GREEN JASPER...
THAT BLOODSTONE CAMEO...
I KNOW THAT'S NOT WHAT IT IS.
YEAH...
GOOD LUCK.


I BETTER CHANGE THE SUBJECT BEFORE SHE BREAKS ANYTHING ELSE.
Aaw...
I KNOW!
BEEP
AND I CAN'T EVEN EXORCISE THEM! THEY JUST PUT ME THROUGH FREAKY STUFF!
CRUMBL
SMASH
THE WISE MAN'S STONE BRINGS OUT ONE'S TRUE POWER...
WHATEVER THAT MEANS! ALL I CAN DO IS SEE GHOSTS AND EVIL SPIRITS!
AH! LOOK, IT'S AN ACCIDENT! AN ACCIDENT! HOW SCARY!


THE MOVIE BEING FILMED IS THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED DEBUT OF BRILLIANT NEWCOMER, TSUGUMI KUNUKI-CHAN
SHE FIRST MADE NEWS BY BEING CHOSEN OVER ALL OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND YOUNG ACTRESSES WHO AUDITIONED.
THAT'S RIGHT, FOLKS!
RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF FILMING, A CAR CRASHED ONTO THE SCENE!

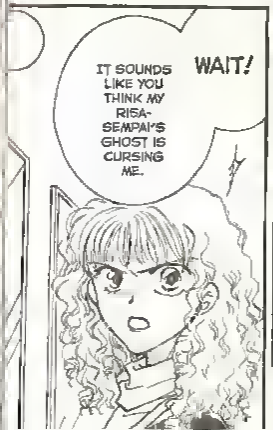

...TSUGUMI TURNS INTO THIS GLITTERING SUPER STAR!
...I END UP WITH THIS LOUSY PART-TIME JOB AT THIS CREEPY JEWELRY STORE. MEANWHILE...
MY MOM DIES MY DAD RUNS AWAY. AND THEN, SOMEHOW ...
Creepy? Ack!
It's so unfair!!
What's up with that?
GRIP

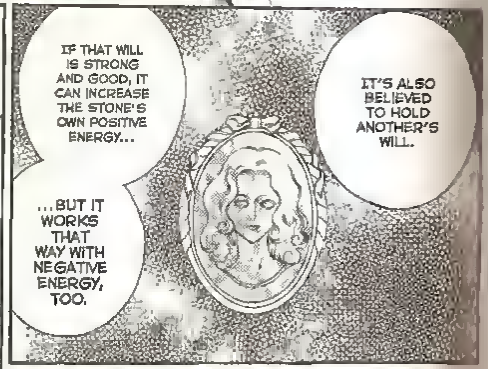
I DON'T GET IT...
I JUST CAN'T HELP WORRYING ABOUT HER.
HAAH...

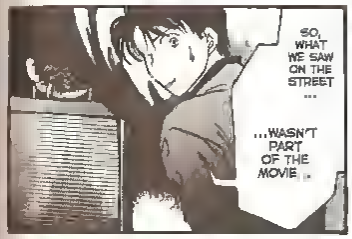
THAT'S NOTHING TO BE PROUD OF!!
NOT JUST ANYBODY CAN DIGEST A WISE MAN'S STONE!
Your approach is fearsome!
GOOD!!

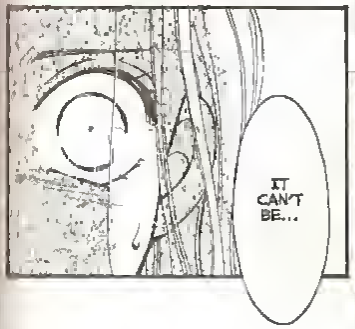
TH... THAT'S NOT TRUE!
WHY AM I COMPLAINING? IT'S NOT LIKE I'M SO TALENTED OR FULL OF DREAMS...
SPLIT
OH, YEAH?
HOW CAN YOU THINK THAT? MIHARU-SAN, NOBODY CAN BEAT YOUR AWESOME TALENT!

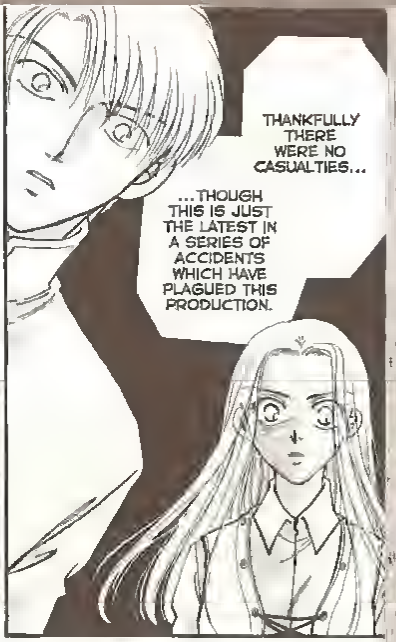
FIRST OFF, THIS IS A GOOD LUCK CHARM!
THERE'S NO WAY!
YOU THINK WHAT'S CAUSING THE ACCIDENTS IS MY CAMEO?
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THAT CAMEO, IS CARVED FROM BLOODSTONE, WHICH HELPS ONE TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES TO FAME...
...AND AS A POWER STONE, IT CAN HEAL EXTERNAL WOUNDS.

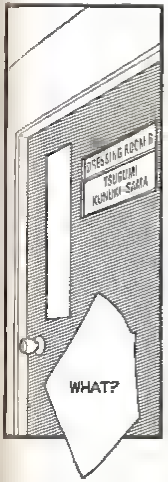

WAIT!
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU THINK MY RISA-SEMPAI'S GHOST IS CURSING ME.

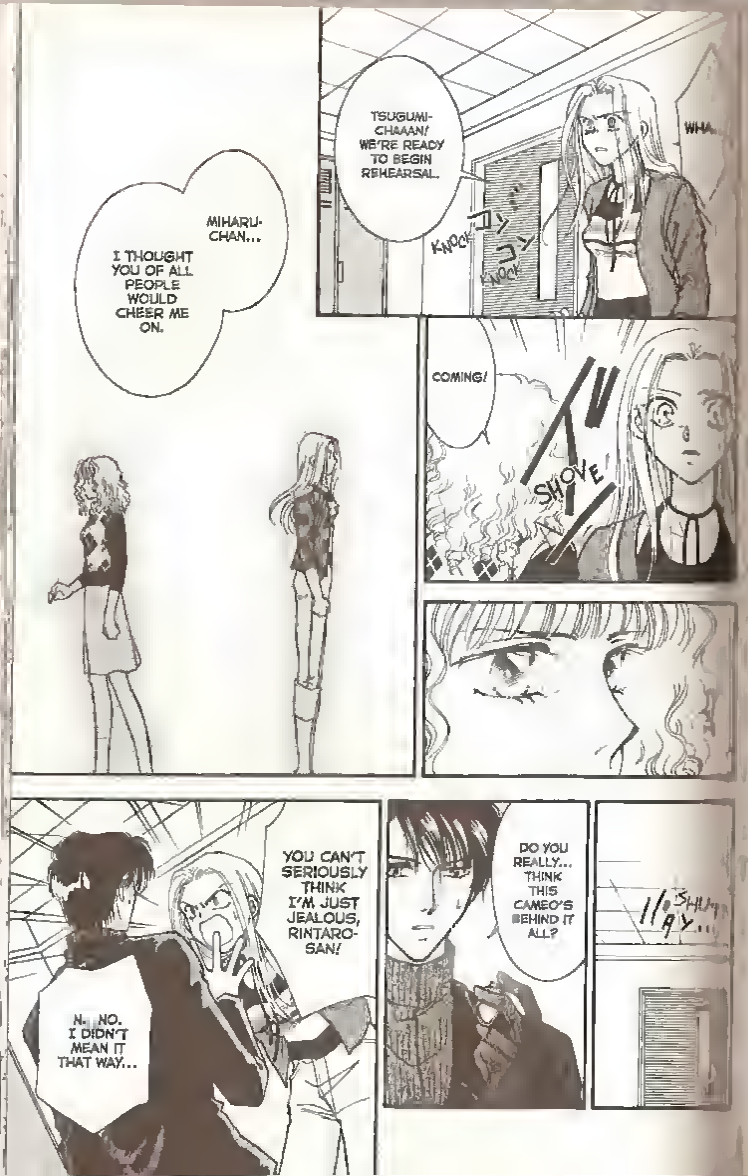

IF THAT WILL IS STRONG AND GOOD, IT CAN INCREASE THE STONE'S OWN POSITIVE ENERGY...
...BUT IT WORKS THAT WAY WITH NEGATIVE ENERGY, TOO.
IT'S ALSO BELIEVED TO HOLD ANOTHER'S WILL.

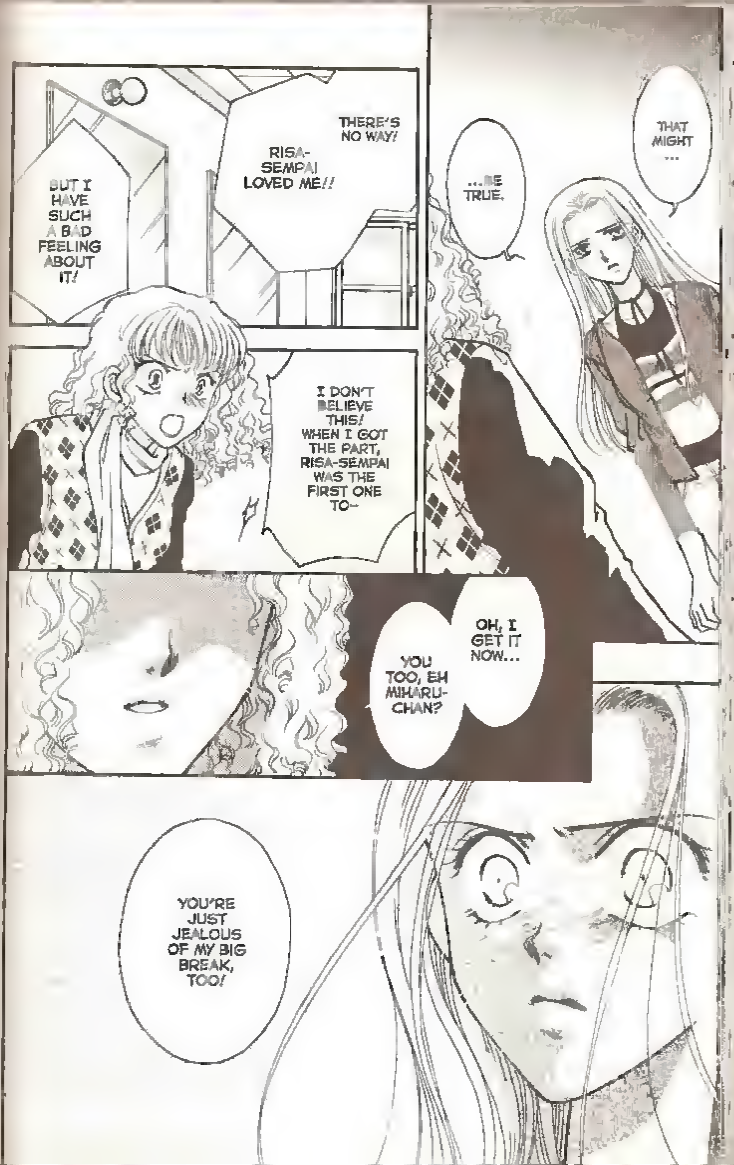

SO, WHAT WE SAW ON THE STREET...
...WASN'T PART OF THE MOVIE.


IT CAN'T BE...

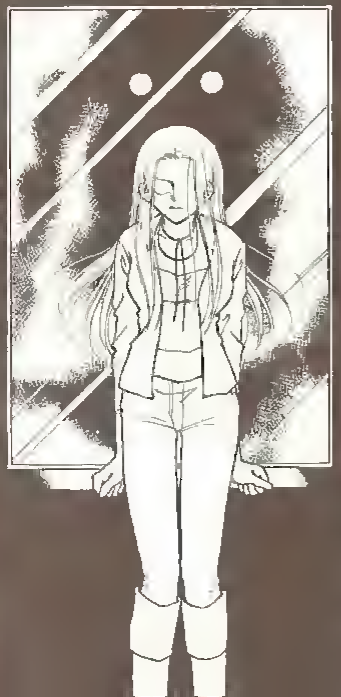

THANKFULLY THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES...
...THOUGH THIS IS JUST THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF ACCIDENTS WHICH HAVE PLAGUED THIS PRODUCTION.

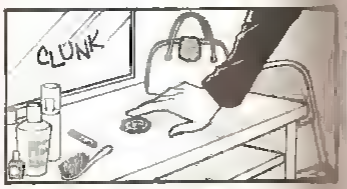

DRESSING ROOM B
TSUJIUMI
KUNIUKI-SOZAI
WHAT?


MIHARU-CHAN...
I THOUGHT YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD CHEER ME ON.
TSUGUMI-CHAAAN! WE'RE READY TO BEGIN REHEARSAL.
KNOCK
WHA...
COMING!
SHOVE
YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY THINK I'M JUST JEALOUS, RINTARO-SAN!
N...NO. I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY...
DO YOU REALLY... THINK THIS CAMEO'S BEHIND IT ALL?
SHUT
RY...


THERE'S NO WAY!
RISA-SEMPAI LOVED ME!!
BUT I HAVE SUCH A BAD FEELING ABOUT IT!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! WHEN I GOT THE PART, RISA-SEMPAI WAS THE FIRST ONE TO--
THAT MIGHT ...
...BE TRUE.
OH, I GET IT NOW...
YOU TOO, EH MIHARU-CHAN?
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS OF MY BIG BREAK, TOO!

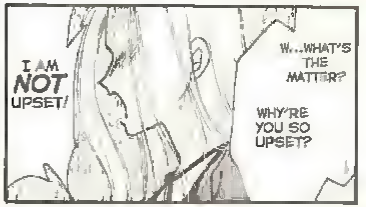
IF ONLY SHE'D GO AWAY...

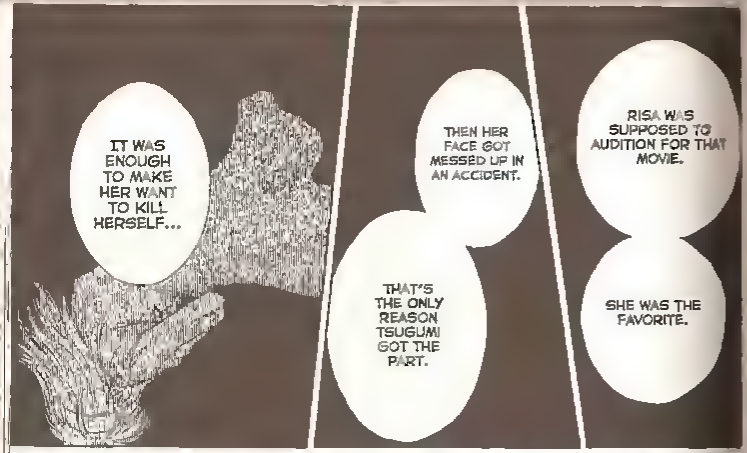




MAYBE ONE OF THEM KNOWS ABOUT THE CAMEO—
THAT'S ENOUGH!
THAT MEANS OTHER PEOPLE AROUND TSUGUMI-SAN ARE JEALOUS OF HER.
AH!
WAIT...SHE SAID "YOU TOO" DIDN'T SHE?

HOW DARE SHE TAKE THAT ATTITUDE AFTER WE TRIED TO WARN HER!?
MIHARU-SAN?
DOESN'T IT PROVE...
...SHE'S ALREADY LETTING THIS CELEBRITY THING GO TO HER HEAD!?



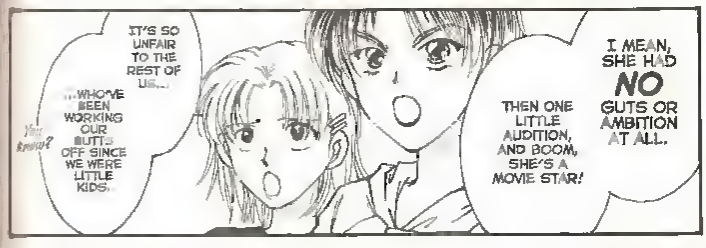

IT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE HER WANT TO KILL HERSELF...
THEN HER FACE GOT MESSED UP IN AN ACCIDENT.
THAT'S THE ONLY REASON TSUGUMI GOT THE PART.
RISA WAS SUPPOSED TO AUDITION FOR THAT MOVIE.
SHE WAS THE FAVORITE.

WHAT?

WE'RE ON A SHORT BREAK, SO CAN YOU MAKE IT QUICK?
MIHARU-CHAAAN, WHAT DID YOU WANT?

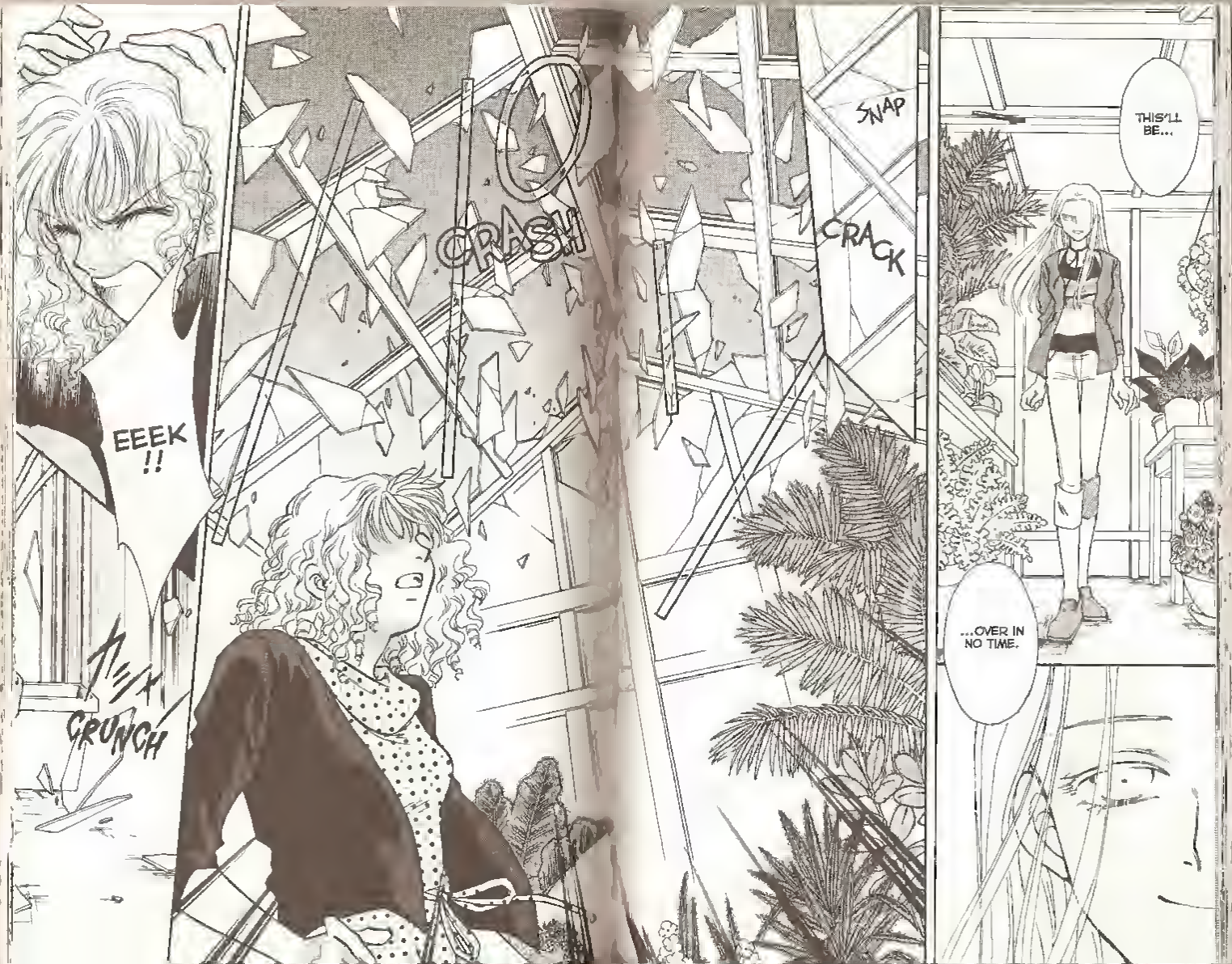
CREAK

HUH!?
ガビ
SHOCK
XXTH ANNUAL PERFORMANCE
SOMEBODY JEALOUS OF TSUGUMI?
THAT WOULD BE JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY IN THE ACTORS GUILD.
KINO
TOKINO
ACTORS GUILD


IT'S SO UNFAIR TO THE REST OF US...
...WHO'VE BEEN WORKING OUR BUTTS OFF SINCE WE WERE LITTLE KIDS.
You know?
THEN ONE LITTLE AUDITION, AND BOOM, SHE'S A MOVIE STAR!
I MEAN, SHE HAD NO GUTS OR AMBITION AT ALL.

THAT'S A WHOLE DIFFERENT THING.
WHEN A GIRL YOU SEE AS YOUR LITTLE SISTER SUDDENLY LEAPS AHEAD AND OUTSHINES YOU, IT'S REALLY TOUGH, YOU KNOW?
HUH? BUT I THOUGHT SH... LOVED TSUGUMI-SAN...

AND FOR RISA TO DIE WITH ALL THAT PENT-UP ANGER...
...I FEEL SO SAD FOR HER.


EEEK !!
CRUNCH
CRASH!
SNAP
CRACK
THIS'LL BE...
...OVER IN NO TIME.

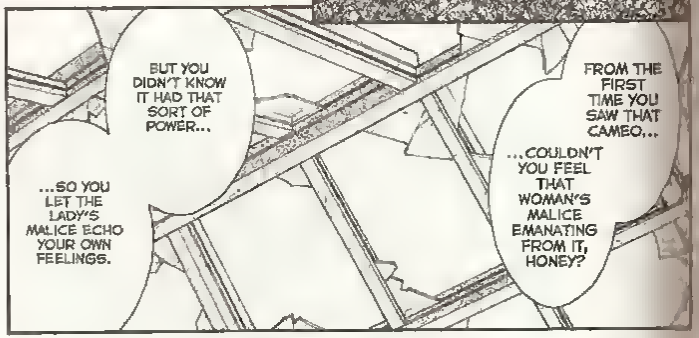
WH... WHO'RE YOU?
What's with this flamboyant guy?
I WASN'T EXPECTING GLASS SHOWERS, SO...
...I DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA.
MY PARDONS... OH, PRINCESS.
MY POOR LITTLE KITTEN'S BEEN QUITE AFFECTED
HA HA...
TOUCH
IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS...
...THAT A WAKE-UP KISS IS PRACTICALLY A PROMISE.

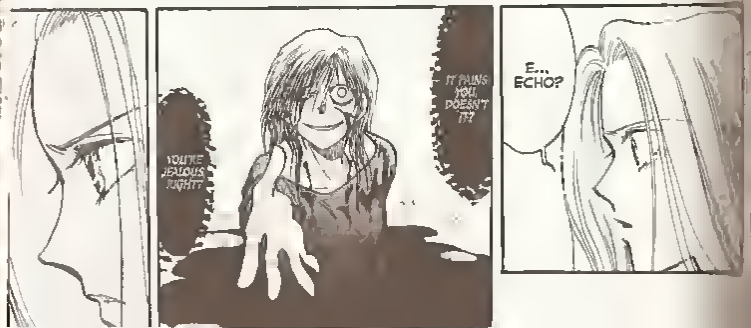
CRMBL
BUT... WHY'S THE GLASS IN SUCH LITTLE FRAG-MENTS?
IT... DOESN'T HURT?
POP
POP

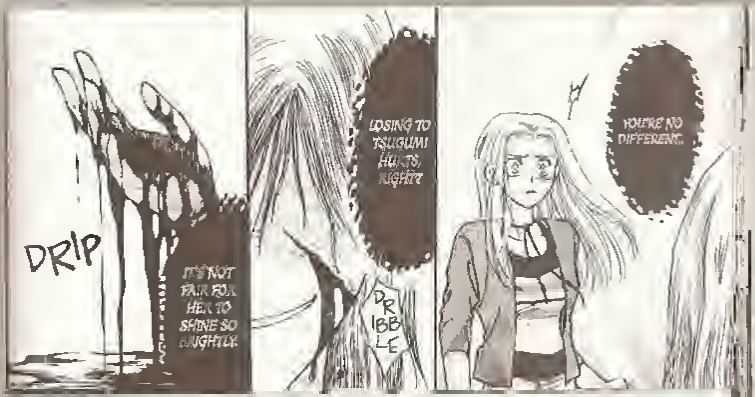
ROLL..
DRIP
BLOOD..
LEAK..
EEK ...!
CLANG
DRIBBLE
HUH?
WHA? WHERE AM I?
GASP
UH, WHAT WAS I DOING?
Oh boy oh boy oh boy.
Heh.
THE CAMEO?
PLOP
THIS SHOULD EXPLAIN THINGS, MY LITTLE ANGEL.
WHA...
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, YOU OVER-SEXED MAGIC BOY!!
SHOVE
TCH.. SO SHE SNAPPED OUT OF IT, EH?
SNAP

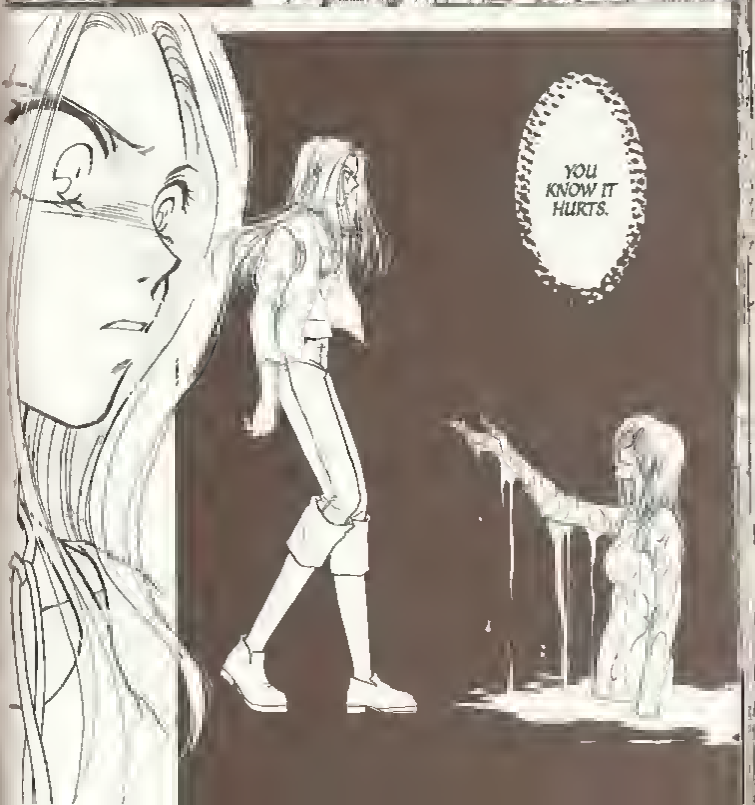
...I WOULD HAVE BEEN CHOSEN...
IF ONLY I HADN'T BEEN SCARRED...
GIFT
EEEK!!
BLOCK
IS THAT WHY YOU'RE AFTER TSUGUMI!?
YOU CAN'T BLAME HER FOR YOUR BAD LUCK!
RISA DIDN'T DIE IN AN ACCIDENT.
HER FACE WAS DAMAGED...
...SO AN EXTRA, TSUGUMI-CHAN, GOT THE LEAD ROLE.
RISA WAS SO SHOCKED SHE TOOK HER OWN LIFE IN DESPAIR.
EEEEEK!!
PLUNK
I'M SO JEALOUS.
RISE
I HATE IT.

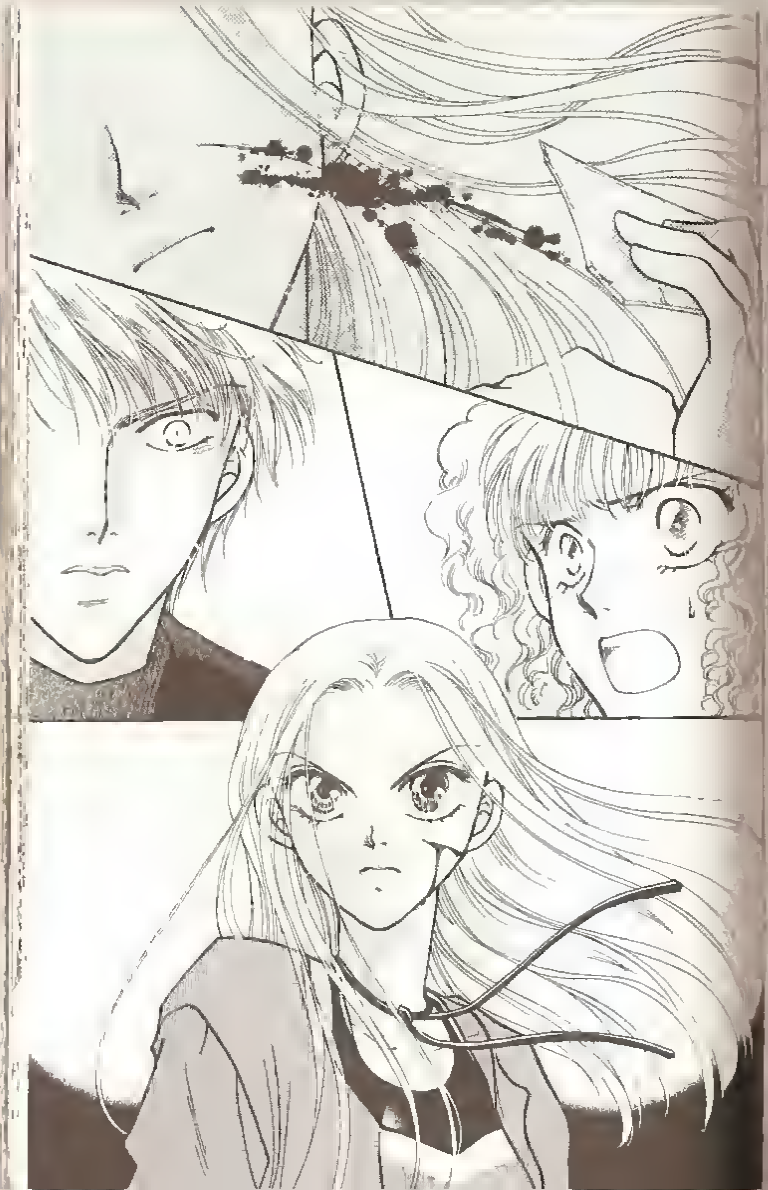
THOUGH PART OF IT'S DUE TO THE WISE MAN'S STONE.
THIS WON'T DO.
JEALOUSY MAKES A WOMAN UGLY, BABY.

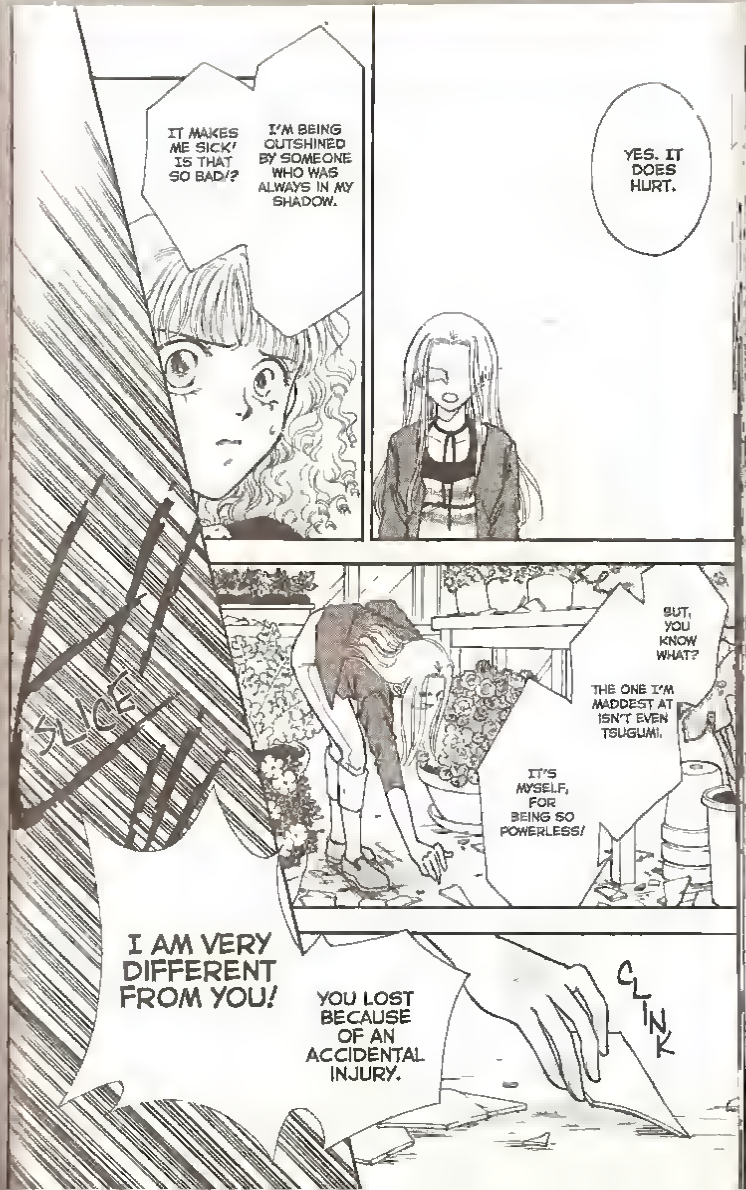

BUT YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT HAD THAT SORT OF POWER...
...SO YOU LET THE LADY'S MALICE ECHO YOUR OWN FEELINGS.
FROM THE FIRST TIME YOU SAW THAT CAMEO...
...COULDN'T YOU FEEL THAT WOMAN'S MALICE EMANATING FROM IT, HONEY?

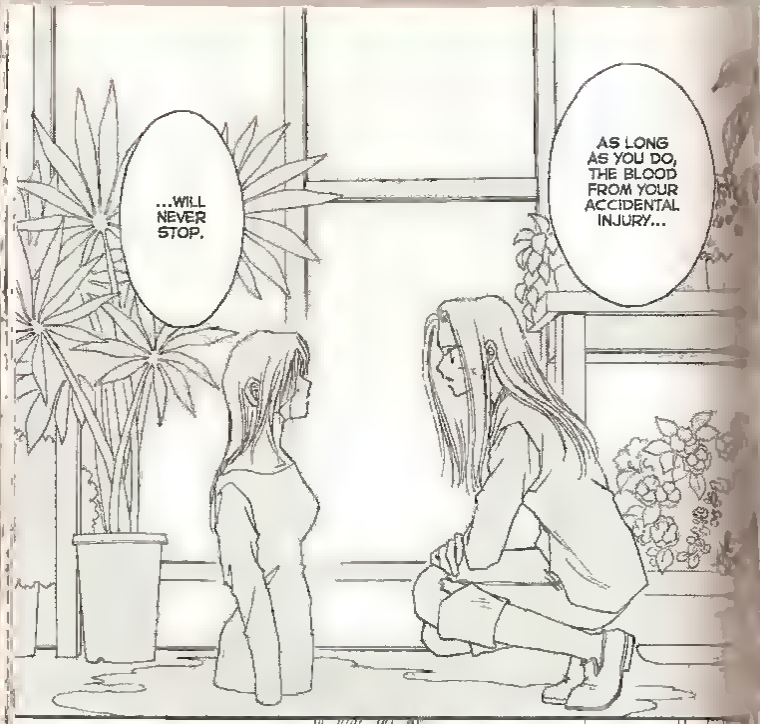

YOU'RE JEALOUS, RIGHT?
IT PAINS YOU, DOESN'T IT?
E... ECHO?

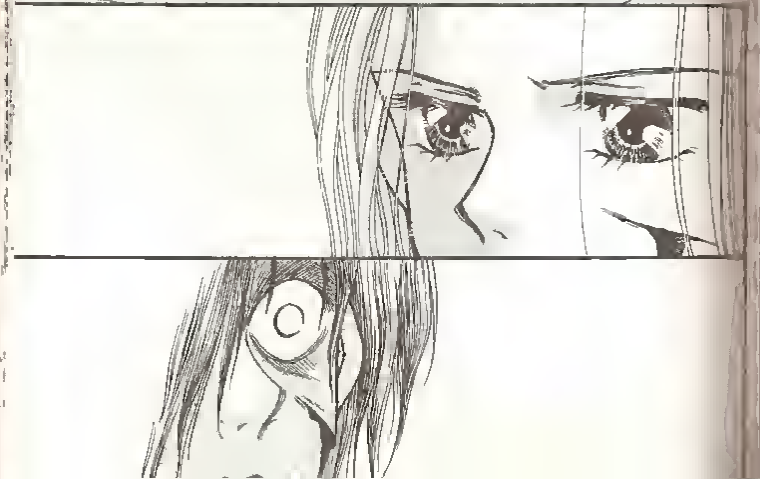

DRIP
IT'S NOT FAIR FOR HER TO SHINE SO BRIGHTLY.
LOSING TO TSUGUMI HURTS, RIGHT?
DRIBBLE
YOU'RE NO DIFFERENT.


YOU KNOW IT HURTS.



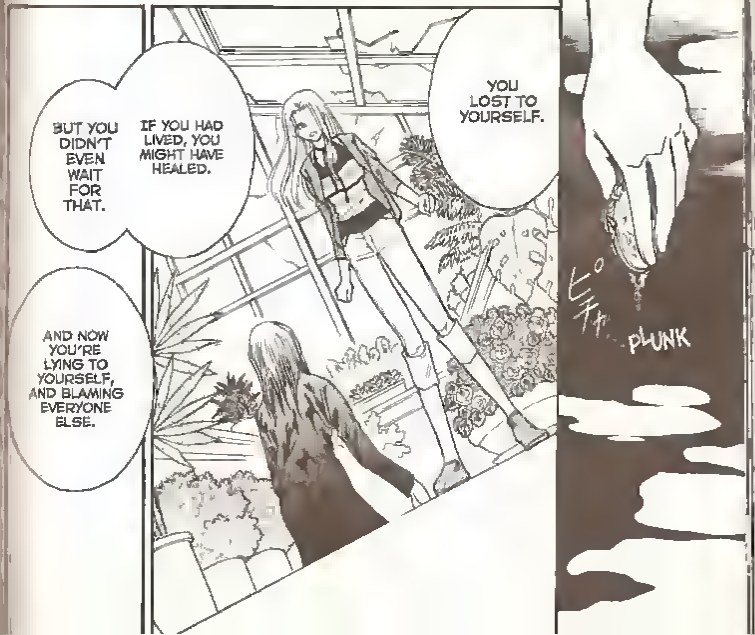

IT MAKES ME SICK! IS THAT SO BAD!?
I'M BEING OUTSHINED BY SOMEONE WHO WAS ALWAYS IN MY SHADOW.
YES. IT DOES HURT.
SLICE
BUT, YOU KNOW WHAT?
THE ONE I'M MADDEST AT ISN'T EVEN TSUGUMI.
IT'S MYSELF, FOR BEING SO POWERLESS!
I AM VERY DIFFERENT FROM YOU!
YOU LOST BECAUSE OF AN ACCIDENTAL INJURY.
CLINK

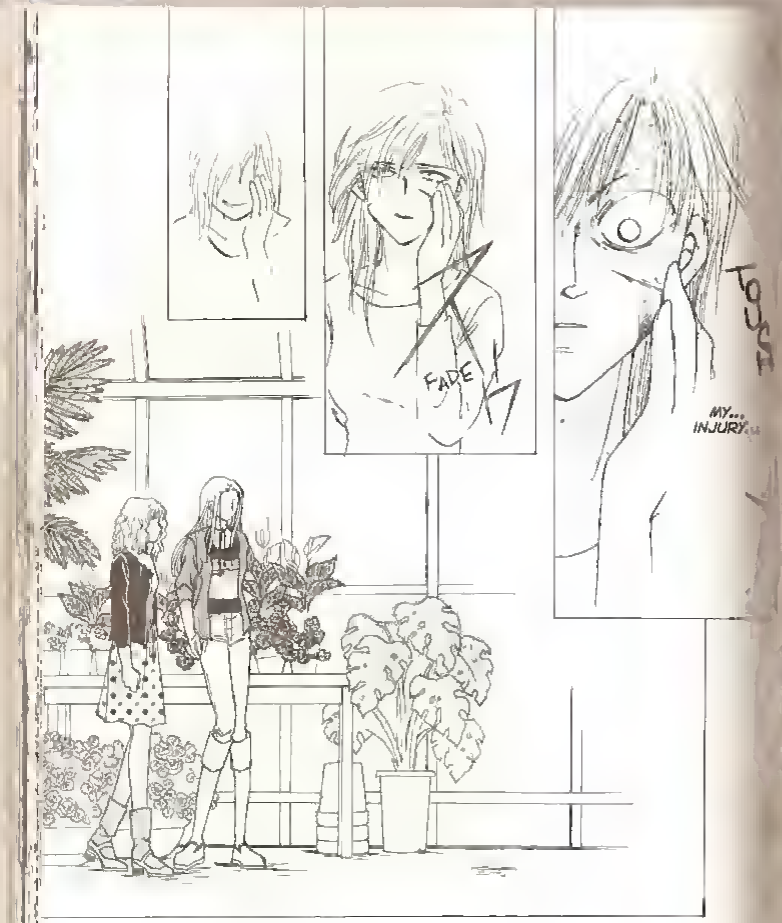

AS LONG AS YOU DO, THE BLOOD FROM YOUR ACCIDENTAL INJURY...
...WILL NEVER STOP.



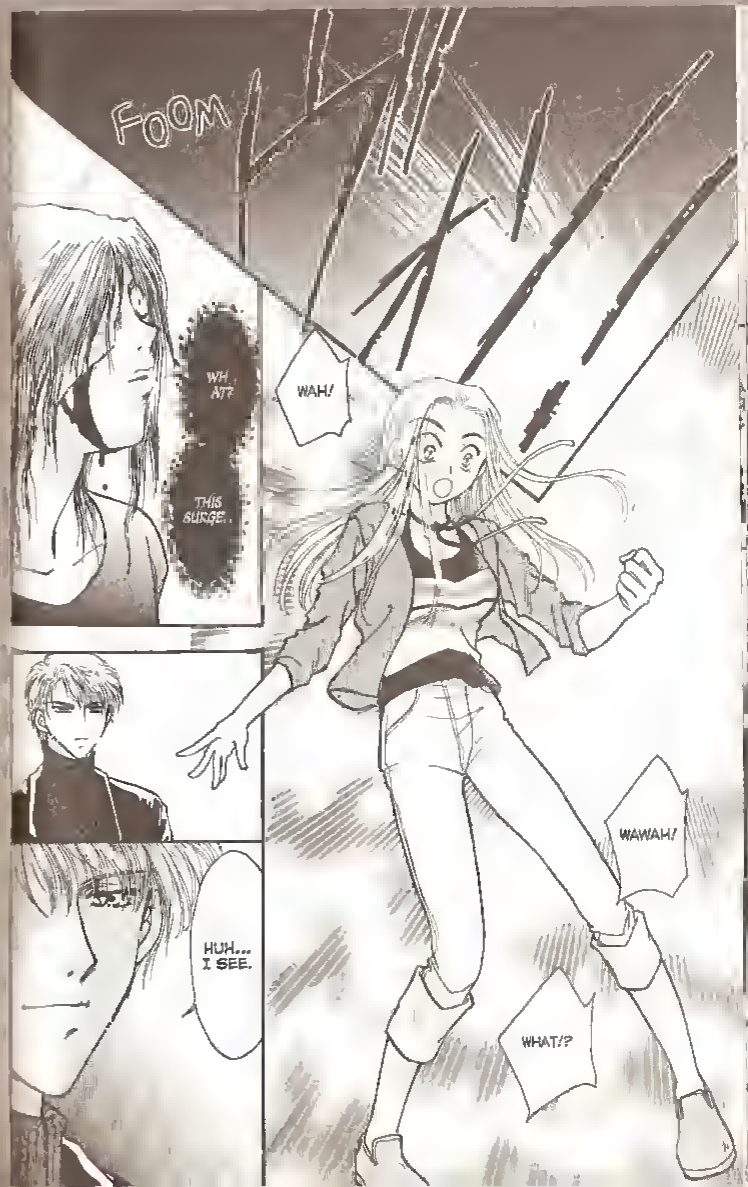
TURN
SPLISH

MIHARU-CHAN...
THAT'S NO GIRL!
She surprised me, too.
THAT WAS GREAT!

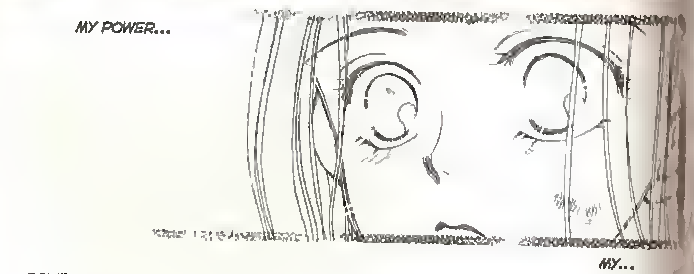

BUT YOU DIDN'T EVEN WAIT FOR THAT.
IF YOU HAD LIVED, YOU MIGHT HAVE HEALED.
AND NOW YOU'RE LYING TO YOURSELF, AND BLAMING EVERYONE ELSE.
YOU LOST TO YOURSELF.
PLUNK

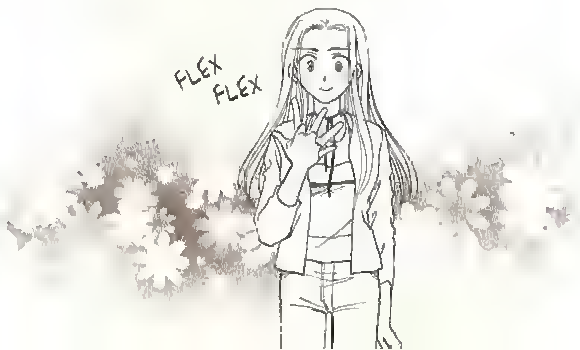

FADE
MY... INJURY...

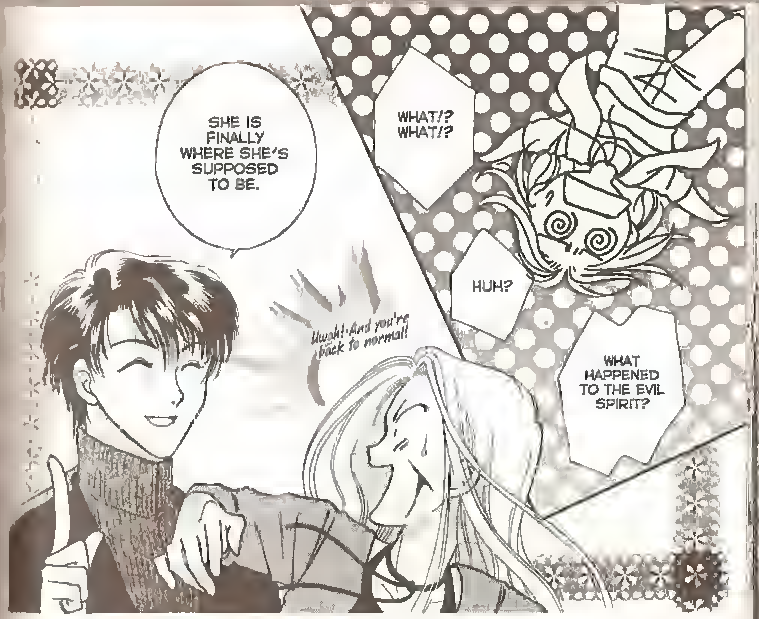
.....

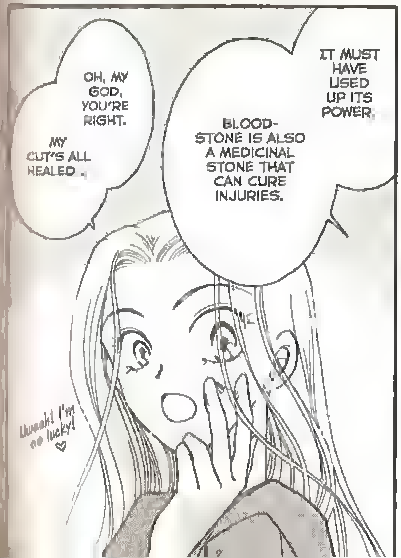

FOOM
WH...AT?
THIS SURGE..
WAH!
WAWAH!
WHAT!?
HUH... I SEE.

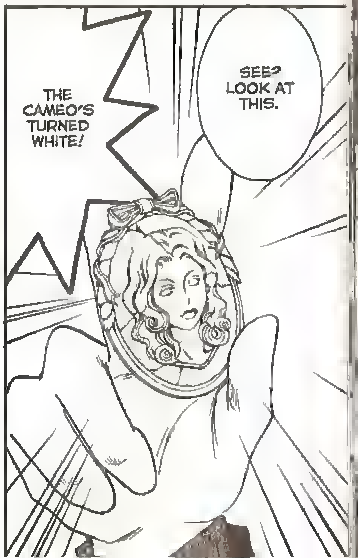
THAT'S A REMARKABLE POWER TO HAVE.
AND THANKS TO IT, RISA-SAN'S SPIRIT IS AT REST.
I THINK THIS IS PART OF YOUR POWER, MIHARU-SAN, AS GUIDED BY THE WISE MAN'S STONE.
YOU EXTRACTED THE BLOOD STONE'S POWER, MIHARU-SAN.

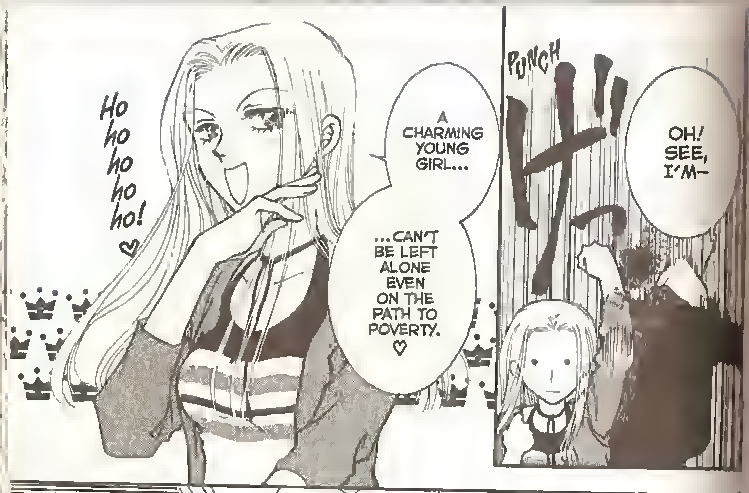

MY POWER...
...POWER.
MY...

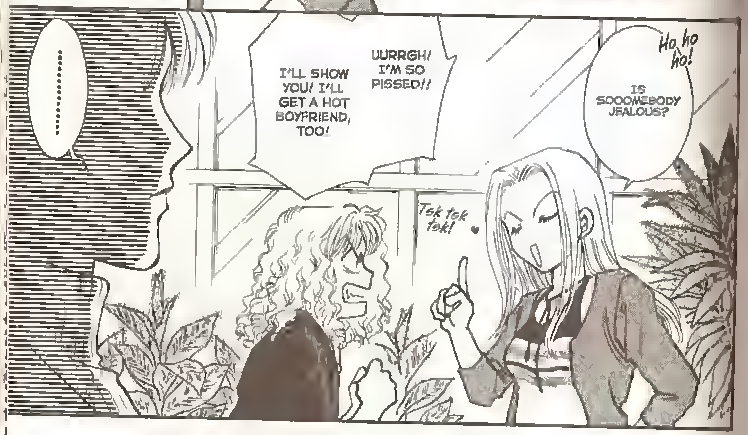

FLEX
FLEX

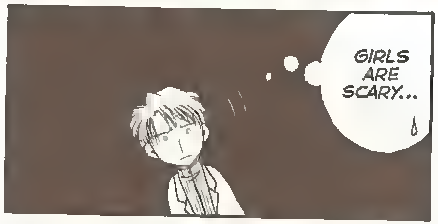

SHE IS FINALLY WHERE SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE.
WHAT!? WHAT!?
HUH?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE EVIL SPIRIT?
Uwah! And you're back to normal!


OH, MY GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT.
MY CUT'S ALL HEALED.
BLOOD-STONE IS ALSO A MEDICINAL STONE THAT CAN CURE INJURIES.
IT MUST HAVE USED UP ITS POWER.
Uwaah! I'm so lucky! ♡

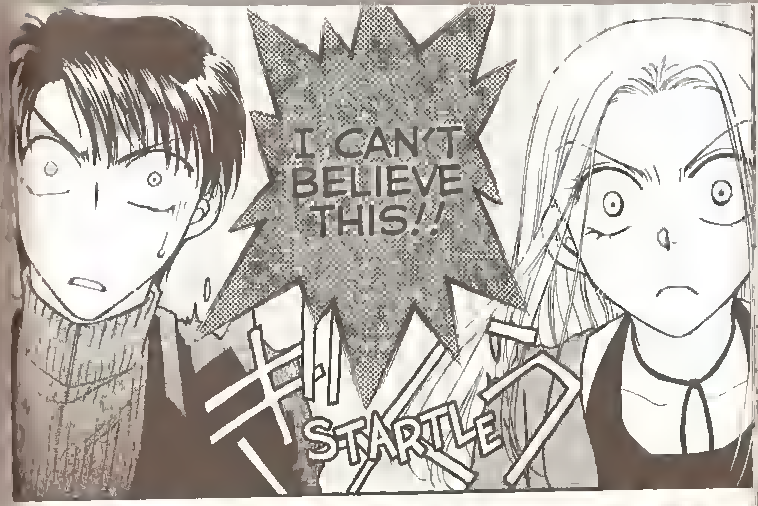

THE CAMEO'S TURNED WHITE!
SEE? LOOK AT THIS.

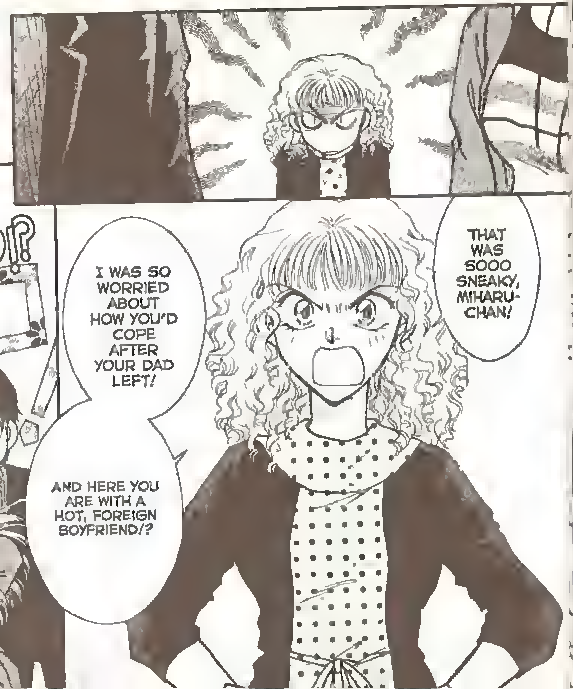


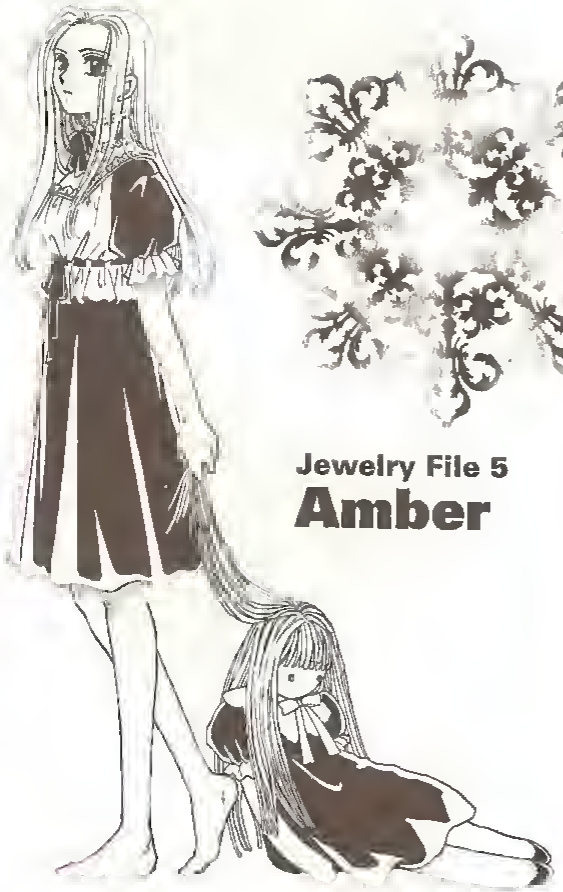




Jewelry File 4: Bloodstone / OVER




BOYFRIEND!?
I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT HOW YOU'D COPE AFTER YOUR DAD LEFT!
AND HERE YOU ARE WITH A HOT, FOREIGN BOYFRIEND!?
THAT WAS SOOO SNEAKY, MIHARU-CHAN!

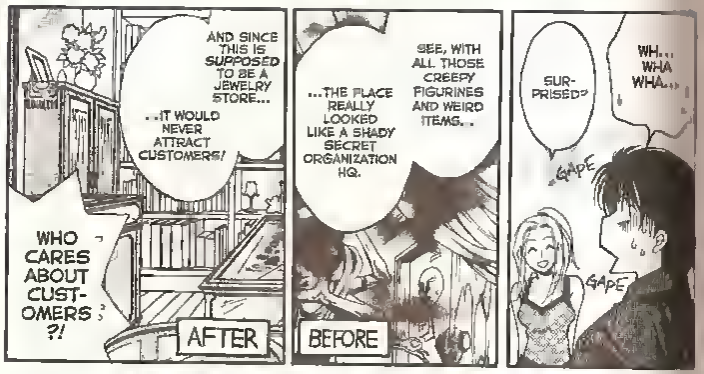


Jewelry File 5

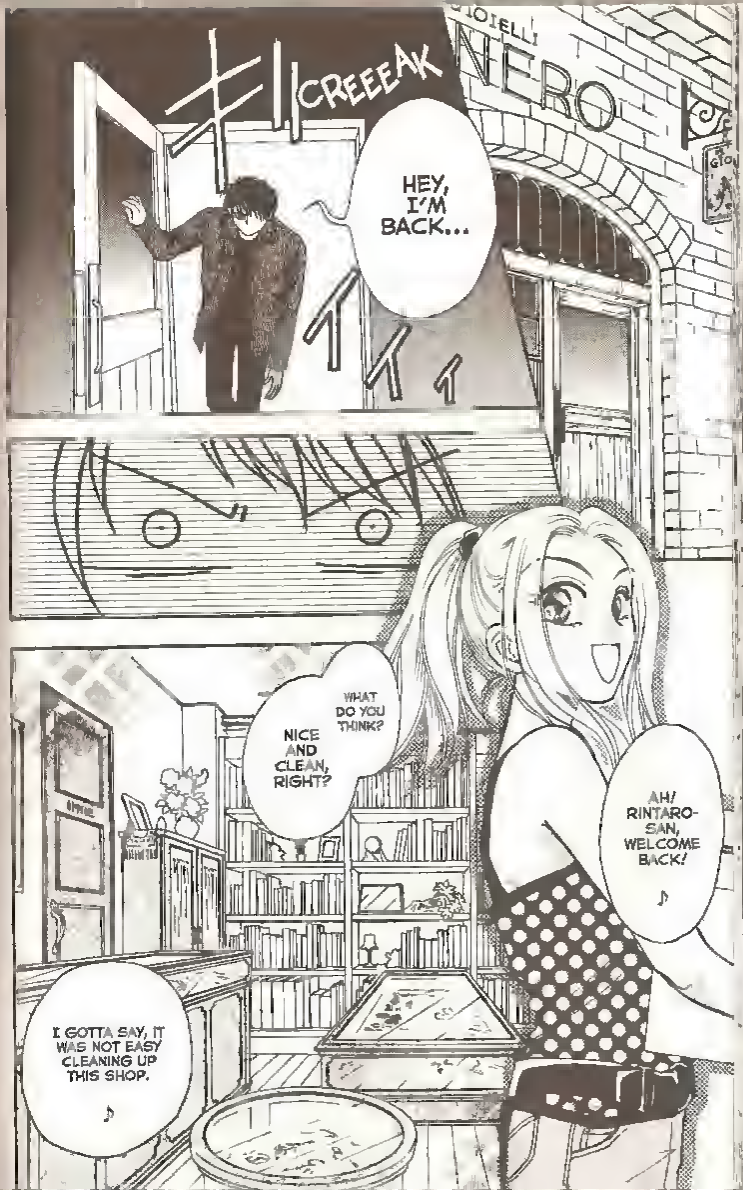
Amber

Bonus Manga

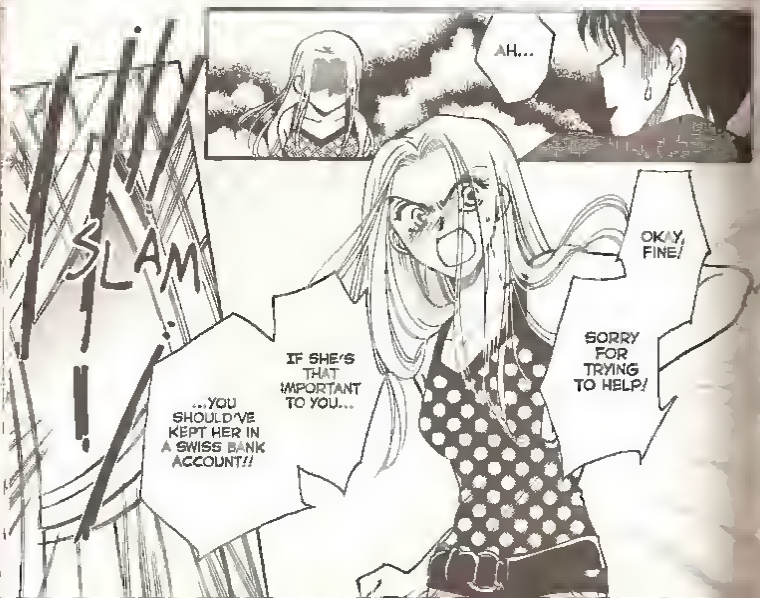
WHY DO YOU ONLY WEAR ONE GLOVE?
THERE'S NO POINT!
They were selling them separately?
HEY, RINTARO-SAN...
I've been wondering...
Again, starts with an apology!
I'M SORRY, BUT...
...WEARING BOTH WOULD MAKE LIFE HARD.
I'M SORRY, BUT IT'S TO.. WELL...
...TO HIDE MY RING AND.. UH...
Notice how he first apologizes
U WAA AAH !!
I'M GIVING YOU THIS!
LOOK, THERE'S NO USE ARGUING!
BUNNY RABBIT
THERE WE GO!
I just wanted to try it out

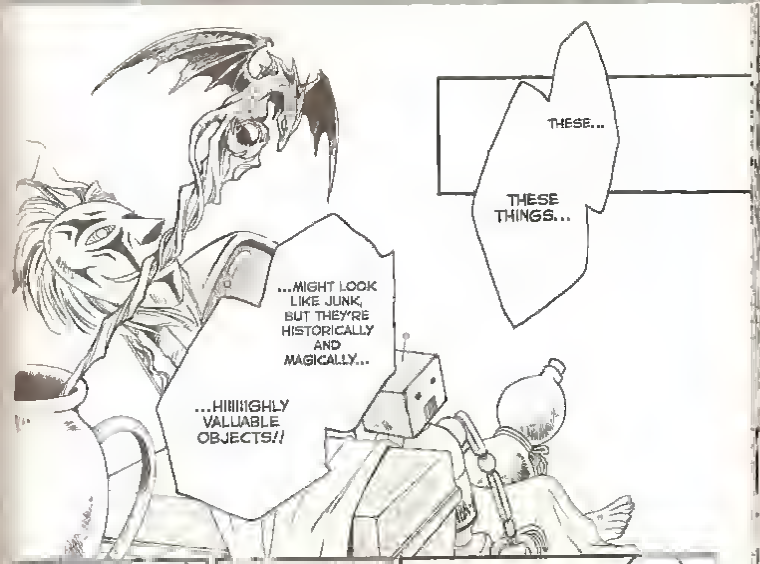

AND SINCE THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A JEWELRY STORE...
...IT WOULD NEVER ATTRACT CUSTOMERS!
WHO CARES ABOUT CUST-OMERS?!
AFTER
SEE, WITH ALL THOSE CREEPY FIGURINES AND WEIRD ITEMS...
...THE PLACE REALLY LOOKED LIKE A SHADY SECRET ORGANIZATION HQ.
BEFORE
SUR-PRISED?
WH... WHA WHA...!
GAPE
GAPE

VROOOM
M-MORE IMPORTANTLY, W-W-WHERE'D... ...ALL MY STUFF GO...?
TOKYO WASTE MANAGEMENT
EEEEEK!

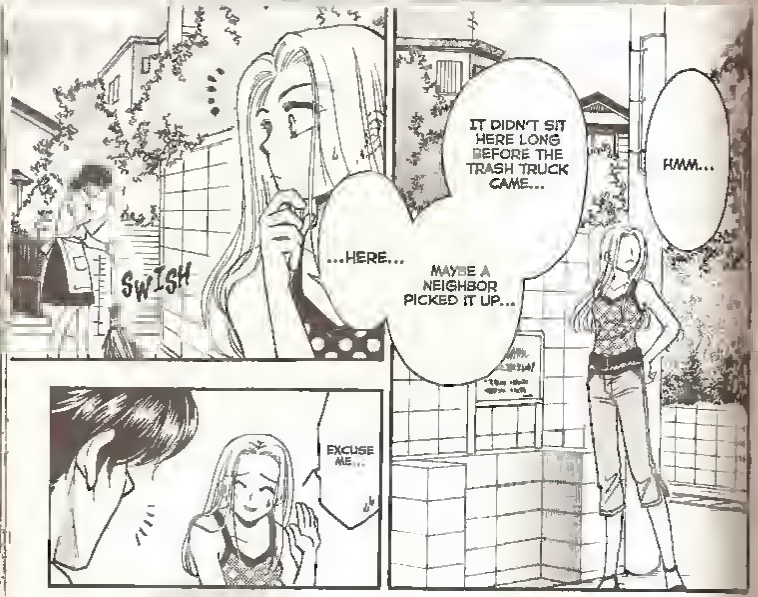

CREEEAK
HEY, I'M BACK...
NERO
NICE AND CLEAN, RIGHT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I GOTTA SAY, IT WAS NOT EASY CLEANING UP THIS SHOP. ♪
AH! RINTARO-SAN, WELCOME BACK! ♪

BEATRICE DRINKS HUMAN BLOOD...!
GEH! A CURSED DOLL!?
SHOCKING
BLOOD
SUCKING
DOLL
ALL-NATURAL
THIS ISN'T GOOD!
THAT WAS NO ORDINARY DOLL!
SNAP
AND IT WILL BE ALL YOUR FAULT, MIHARU-SAN!
IF SOMEONE TOOK HER HOME, I CAN'T THINK WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN...
WHY? WAS IT A LIMITED EDITION?


AH...
SLAM!!
OKAY, FINE!
SORRY FOR TRYING TO HELP!
IF SHE'S THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU...
...YOU SHOULD'VE KEPT HER IN A SWISS BANK ACCOUNT!!


THESE...
THESE THINGS...
...MIGHT LOOK LIKE JUNK, BUT THEY'RE HISTORICALLY AND MAGICALLY...
...HIIIIIGHLY VALUABLE OBJECTS!!

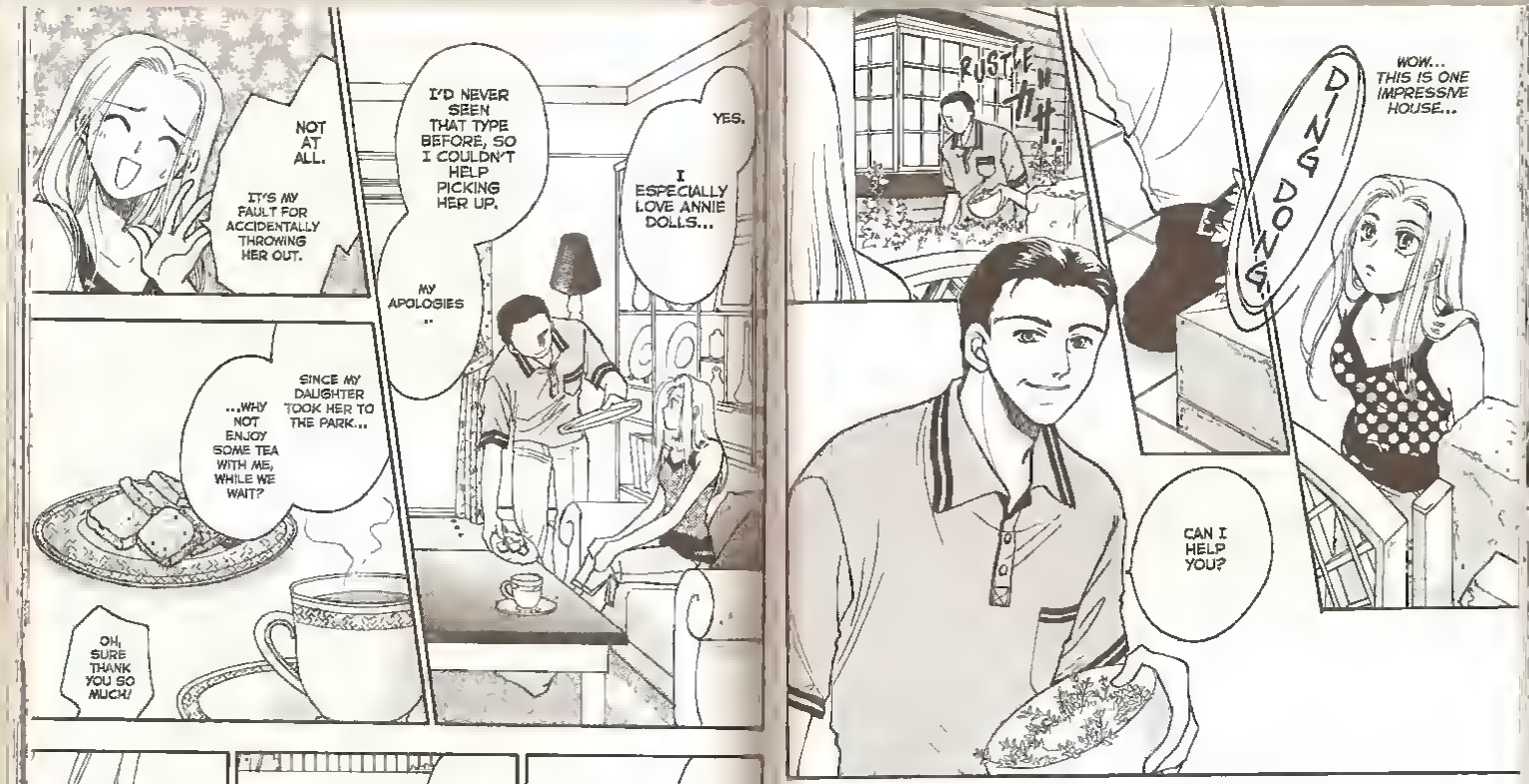
OH, THAT DOLL?
SO WHAT IF YOU'RE MISSING A DOLL OR TWO?
GASP
HUH.
SO, PLEASE DON'T BE ROUGH WITH THEM.
AND ABOVE ALL ELSE, DON'T THROW THEM AWAY!
HUFF
HUFF
B...
BEATRICE ISN'T HERE...

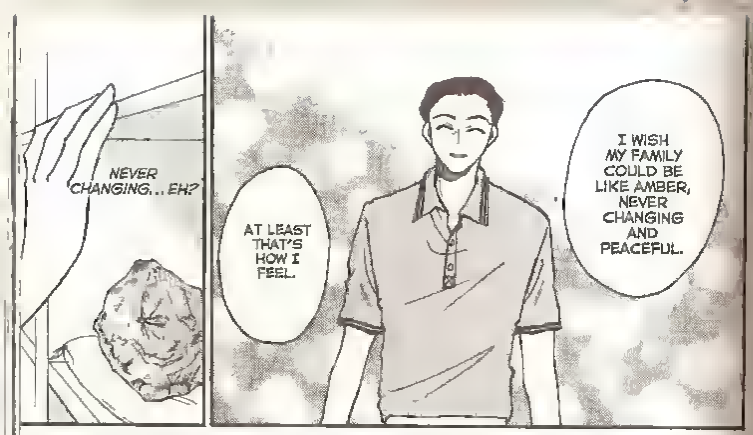

SWISH
...HERE...
MAYBE A NEIGHBOR PICKED IT UP...
IT DIDN'T SIT HERE LONG BEFORE THE TRASH TRUCK CAME...
HMM...
EXCUSE ME...

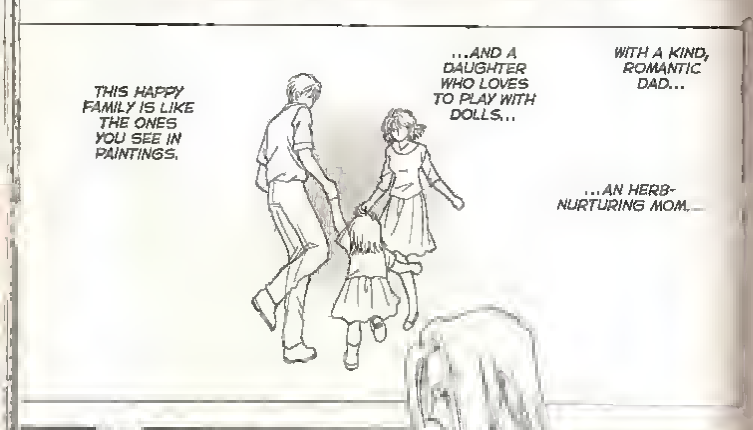
THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE ONE I SAW KAWAI-SAN CARRYING...!
A DOLL?
KAWAI
河合

STOMP
おカ
WHY'S HE SO FUSSY OVER SOME DUMB DOLL!?
WHAT GIVES!?
ALL I WANTED WAS TO HELP.
STOMP
おカ
GASP
I...I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S MY JOB!
I JUST OWE HIM, THAT'S ALL.
FOR ALL THAT HE'S DONE FOR ME.
STOMP
STOMP
SO...

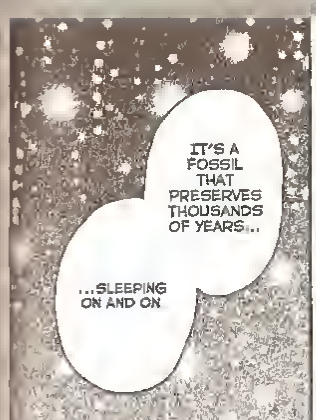
PLEASE SORT ALL TRASH!
- OVERSIZED GARBAGE
- CANS
THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION


WOW... THIS IS ONE IMPRESSIVE HOUSE...
DING DONG
RUSTLE
CAN I HELP YOU?
YOU COLLECT DOLLS!
IS THAT SO?
YES. I ESPECIALLY LOVE ANNIE DOLLS...
I'D NEVER SEEN THAT TYPE BEFORE, SO I COULDN'T HELP PICKING HER UP.
MY APOLOGIES..
NOT AT ALL.
IT'S MY FAULT FOR ACCIDENTALLY THROWING HER OUT.
SINCE MY DAUGHTER TOOK HER TO THE PARK...
...WHY NOT ENJOY SOME TEA WITH ME, WHILE WE WAIT?
OH, SURE THANK YOU SO MUCH!
OH, THIS IS DELICIOUS! ♡
WELL, THANKS!
IT'S THE HERB TEA MY WIFE MAKES
HERBAL CUISINE IS MY WIFE'S HOBBY.
OH, SO THAT'S WHAT THE GARDEN'S ALL ABOUT...
HUH?


NEVER CHANGING... EH?
AT LEAST THAT'S HOW I FEEL.
I WISH MY FAMILY COULD BE LIKE AMBER, NEVER CHANGING AND PEACEFUL.


THIS HAPPY FAMILY IS LIKE THE ONES YOU SEE IN PAINTINGS.
...AND A DAUGHTER WHO LOVES TO PLAY WITH DOLLS...
WITH A KIND, ROMANTIC DAD...
...AN HERB-NURTURING MOM...

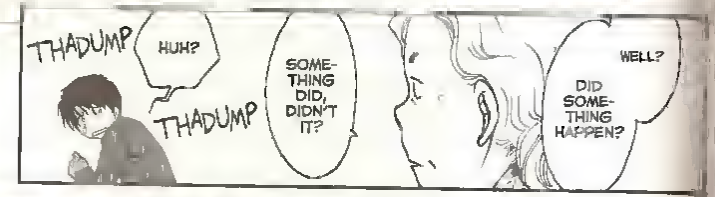
MY FAMILY WAS LIKE THAT, TOO... ONCE.
IF ONLY WE COULD FREEZE OUR HAPPY TIMES, FOREVER...
YES...
BUT THAT'S NOT REALITY...


IT'S A FOSSIL THAT PRESERVES THOUSANDS OF YEARS...
...SLEEPING ON AND ON.

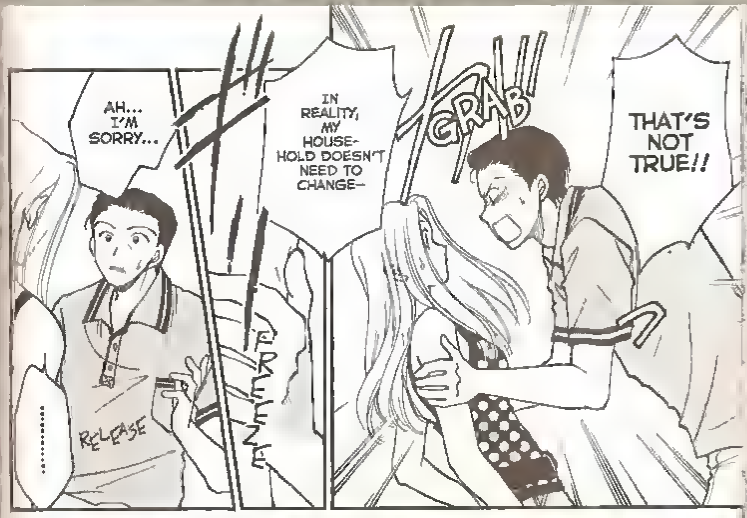
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S ROMANTIC?

WHOA...
WHAT A HUGE AMBER!
AND WITH A BUG IN IT, TOO! WOW!
YES, I LOVE AMBER.

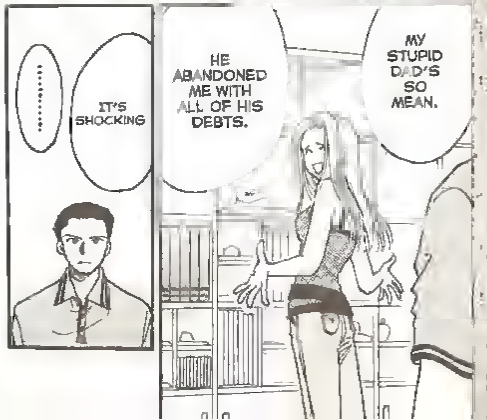
WAH!
HEY, ARE YOU A DETECTIVE?
STARTLE
I'M SURE THAT IT'S FROM INSIDE OF THIS HOUSE...
...THAT I CAN SENSE MIHARU-SAN'S AURA.
SNEAK
HMM...

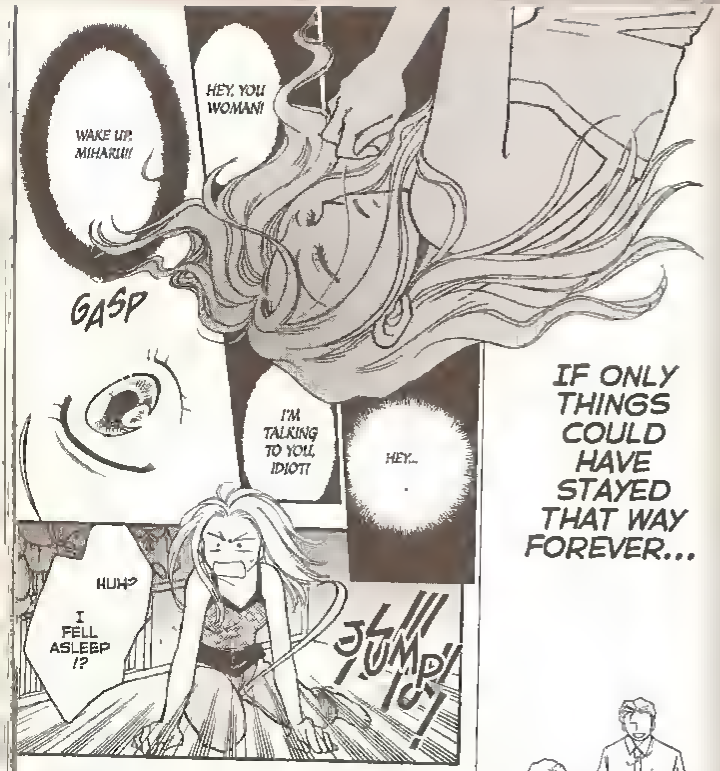

THADUMP
HUH?
THADUMP
SOME-THING DID, DIDN'T IT?
WELL?
DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?

SO, YOU CAN'T TELL ME ANYTHING, EH?
I UNDERSTAND.
UH...
AROUND NOON HE JUST STARTS WANDERING AROUND, AND HE DOESN'T SEEM TO GO TO WORK.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIS WIFE OR LITTLE GIRL IN A WHILE, EITHER
ER...
UH...
UM...
FLOWING
THAT HUSBAND IN THE KAWAI HOUSE-HOLD.
EVER SINCE THAT DIVORCE MESS, HE'S BEEN ODD.

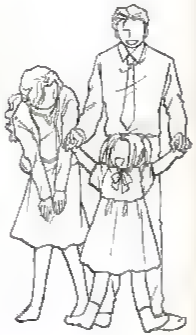

AH... I'M SORRY...
RELEASE
IN REALITY, MY HOUSE-HOLD DOESN'T NEED TO CHANGE--
FREEZE
GRAB!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!!

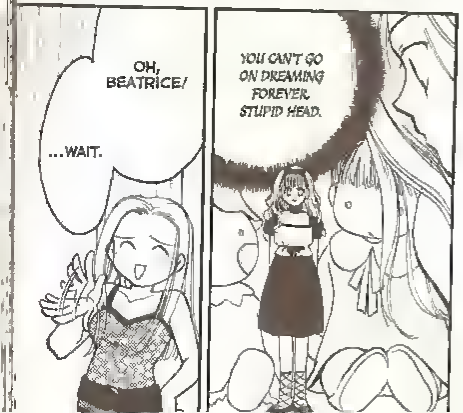
...REALLY DOES SEEM HAPPY.
YOU'RE LUCKY, KAWAI-SAN. YOUR HOME...

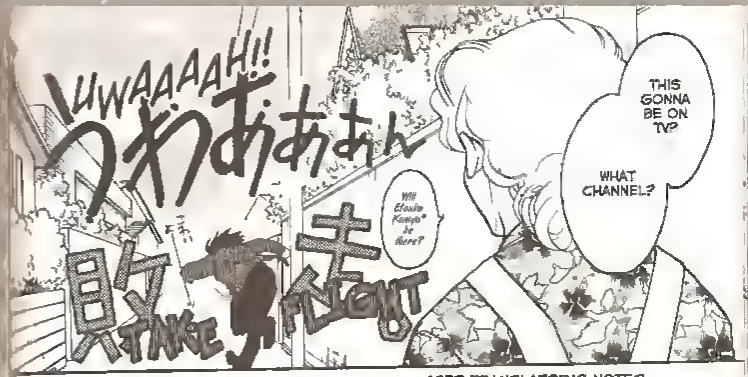

IT'S SHOCKING
HE ABANDONED ME WITH ALL OF HIS DEBTS.
MY STUPID DAD'S SO MEAN.



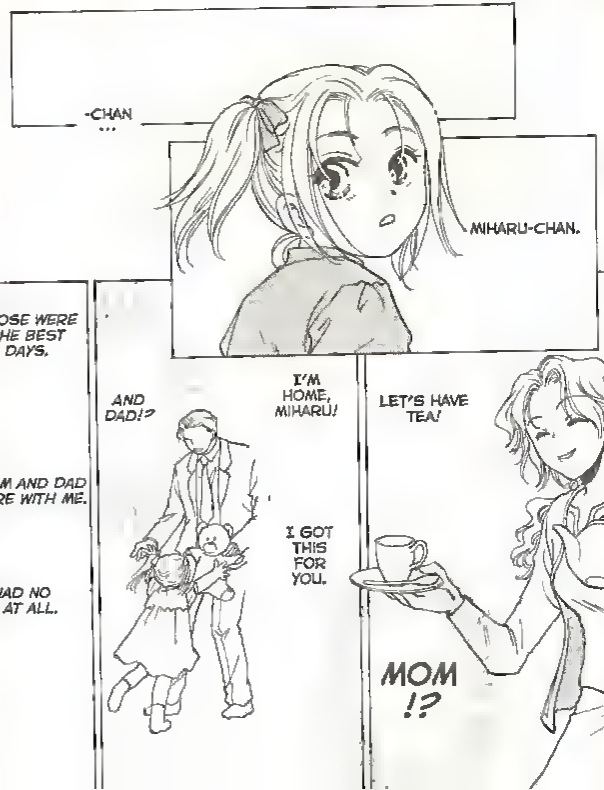
IF ONLY THINGS COULD HAVE STAYED THAT WAY FOREVER...

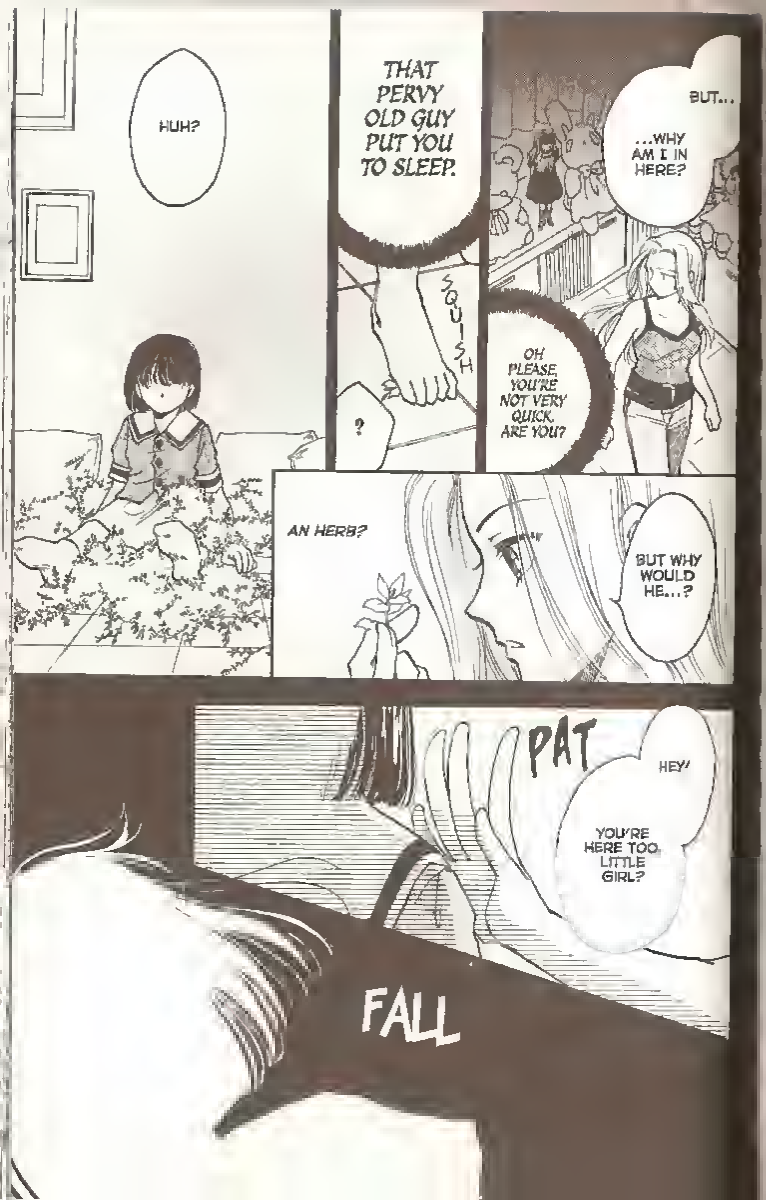






*SEE TRANSLATOR'S NOTES



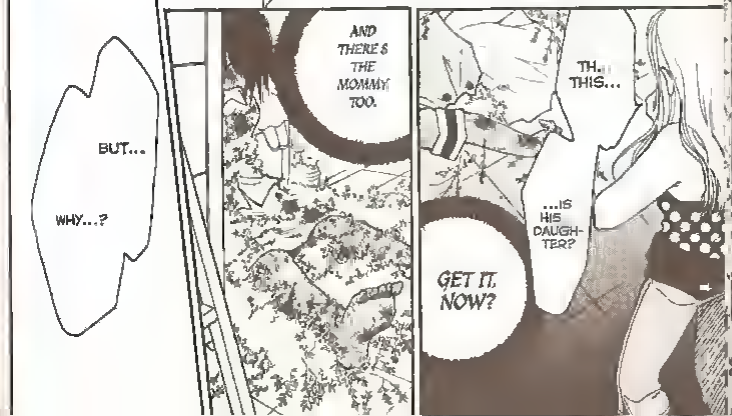

HUH?
THAT PERVY OLD GUY PUT YOU TO SLEEP.
SQUISH
?
BUT...
...WHY AM I IN HERE?
OH PLEASE, YOU'RE NOT VERY QUICK, ARE YOU?
AN HERB?
BUT WHY WOULD HE...?
PAT
HEY!
YOU'RE HERE TOO, LITTLE GIRL?
FALL

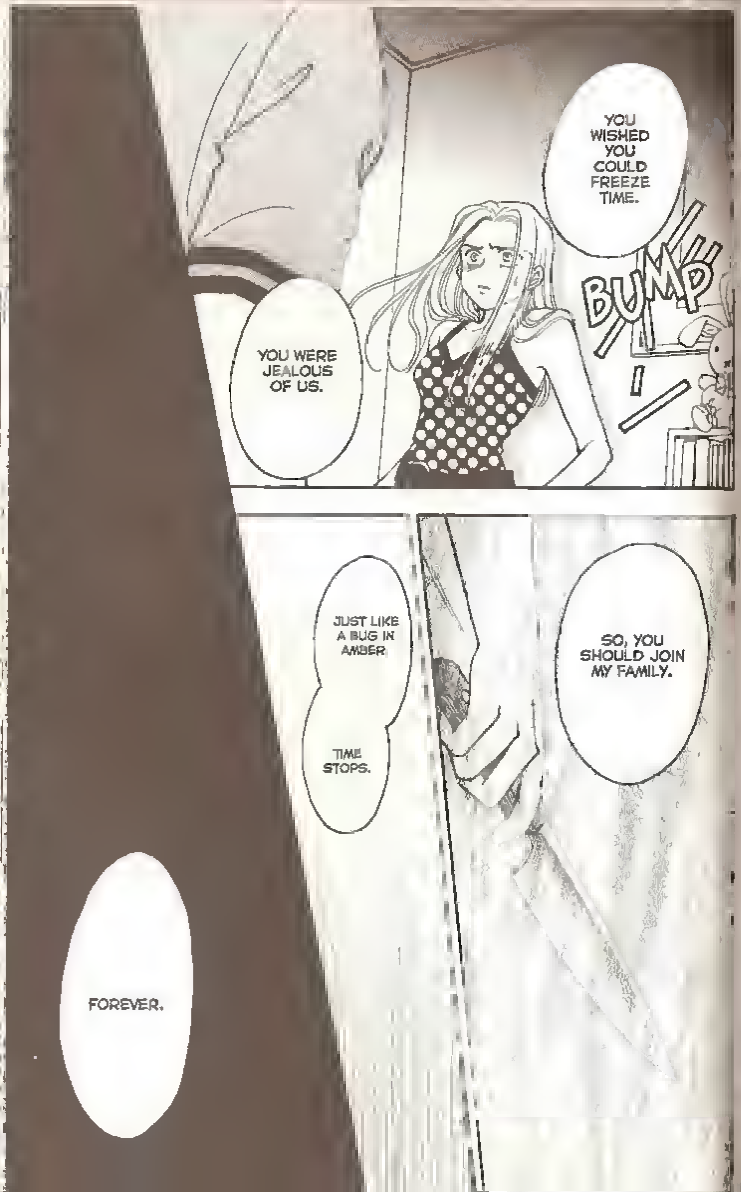
THE DOLL'S TALKING !?
DOOFUS!
THIS ISN'T THE TIME OR PLACE TO FREAK OUT!
RETREAT!!
EEP!
She sure sets serious test!
After I've seen a transforming boy and a headless ghost...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
DOLLS.
SO, THIS IS HIS DAUGHTER'S ROOM?
I THINK THE AIR CONDITIONER'S SET TOO LOW.
AND IT SMELLS WEIRD.
BRRRR
...ANYWAY,
THIS ROOM IS FREEZING.

BECAUSE THEY SAID THEY WERE LEAVING.

TURN
OUR FAMILY OF THREE...
...SO HOW COULD SHE SUGGEST WE SPLIT UP?
...HAD TO STAY EVER UNCHANGING...
THAT'S WHY...

THUD
EE...!

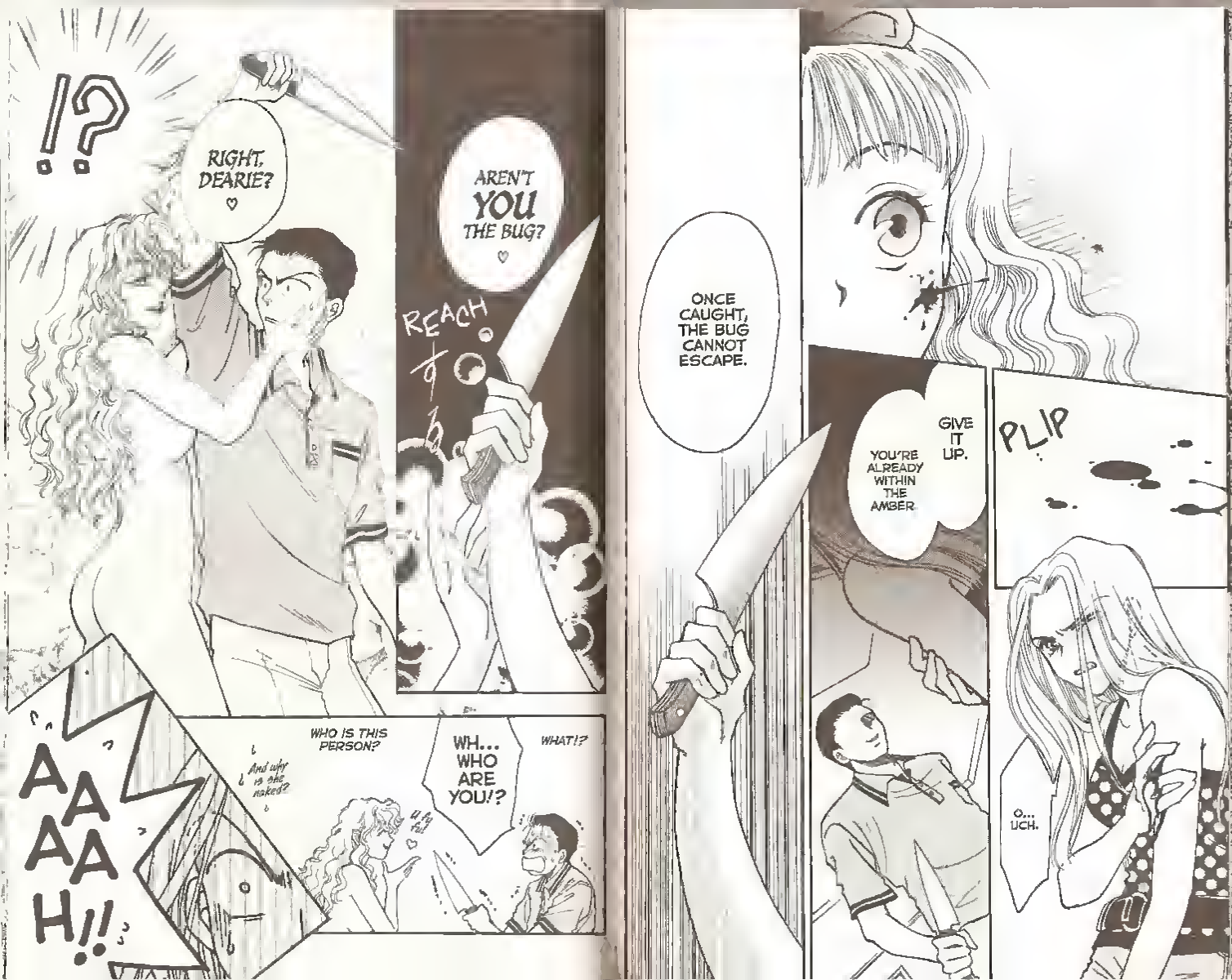

BUT...
WHY...?
AND THERE'S THE MOMMY TOO.
TH... THIS...
...IS HIS DAUGHTER?
GET IT, NOW?

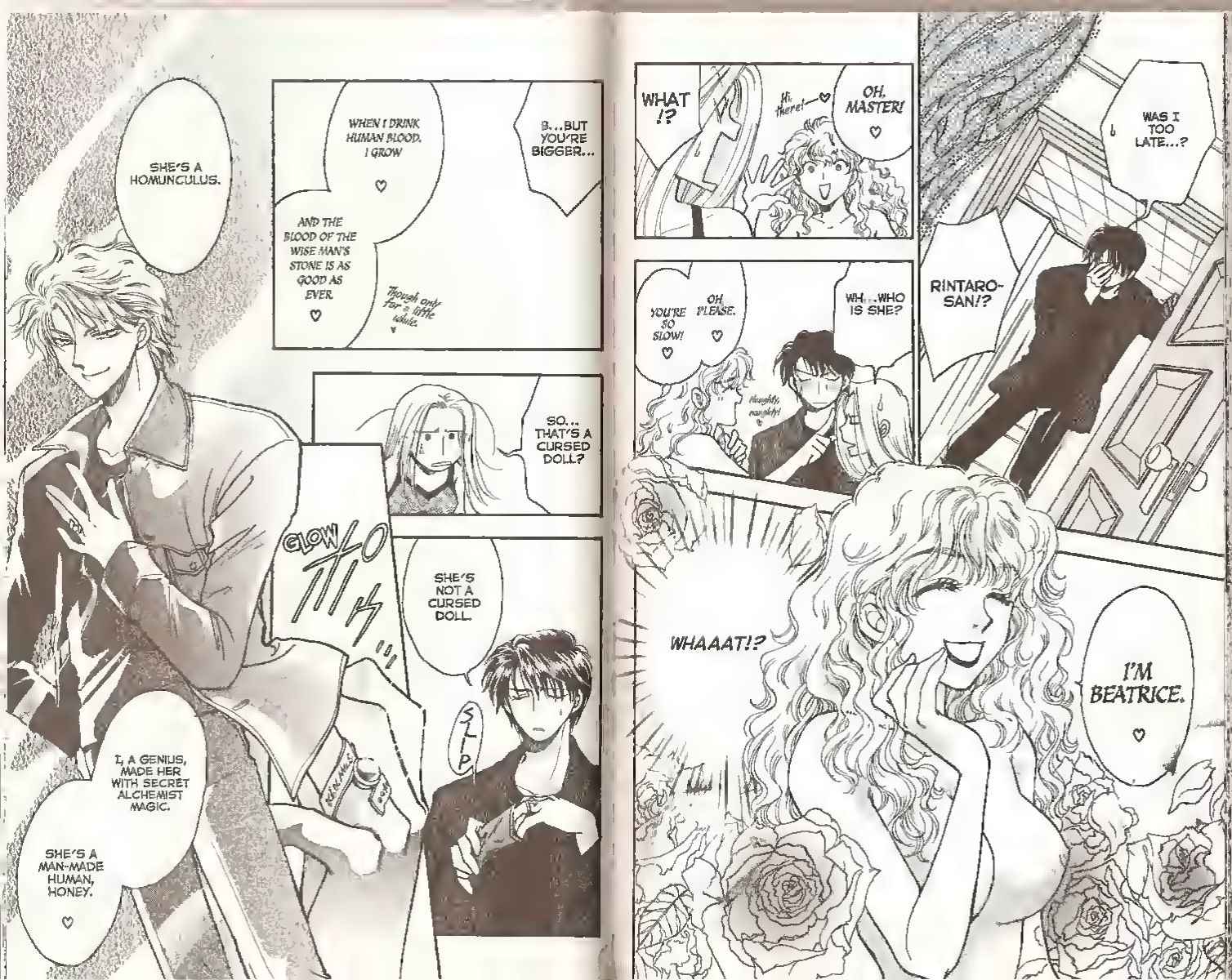

YOU WISHED YOU COULD FREEZE TIME.
BUMP!
YOU WERE JEALOUS OF US.
SO, YOU SHOULD JOIN MY FAMILY.
JUST LIKE A BUG IN AMBER.
TIME STOPS.
FOREVER.

THIS WAY THEY NEVER HAVE TO CHANGE.
WE CAN ALWAYS BE HAPPY, SEE?
THIS ISN'T HAPPINESS!
THAT'S WHY? THIS ...!
YOU SAID IT, YOURSELF.
YOU THINK NOT?
...I STOPPED TIME.

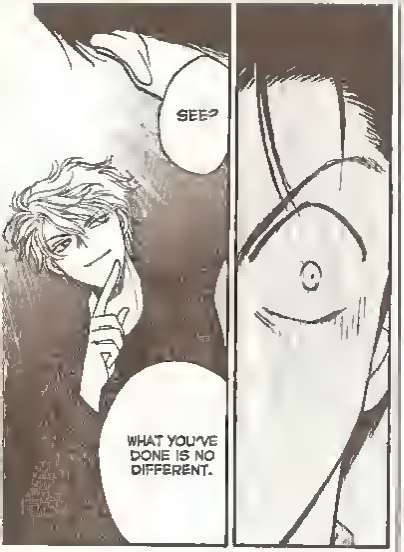
WHO'RE YOU CALLING A CURSED DOLL!?
YOU'RE A CURSED DOLL! DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!!
HUFF
WH... WHAT DO I DO? AT THIS RATE...
I'M A 100% PEDIGREED-
HE'LL RUN YOU RIGHT THROUGH.
HUFF
!!
STAB

DASH
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE!!
RUN, MIHARU!!
SMIRK


!?
RIGHT, DEARIE? ♡
AREN'T YOU THE BUG? ♡
REACH
AAAAH!!
WHO IS THIS PERSON?
And why is she naked?
WH... WHO ARE YOU!?
WHAT!?
U-ta tai
ONCE CAUGHT, THE BUG CANNOT ESCAPE.
YOU'RE ALREADY WITHIN THE AMBER.
GIVE IT UP.
PLIP
O... UCH.


WAS I TOO LATE...?
RINTARO-SAN!?
WHAAAT!?
I'M BEATRICE.
♡
WHAT!?
Hi there!~♡
OH, MASTER!
♡
WH...WHO IS SHE?
OH PLEASE.
YOU'RE SO SLOW!
♡
Naughty, naughty!
♡
B...BUT YOU'RE BIGGER...
WHEN I DRINK HUMAN BLOOD, I GROW
♡
AND THE BLOOD OF THE WISE MAN'S STONE IS AS GOOD AS EVER.
♡
Though only for a little while.
♥
SHE'S A HOMUNCULUS.
SO... THAT'S A CURSED DOLL?
GLOW
SHE'S NOT A CURSED DOLL.
SLIP
I, A GENIUS, MADE HER WITH SECRET ALCHEMIST MAGIC.
SHE'S A MAN-MADE HUMAN, HONEY.
♡

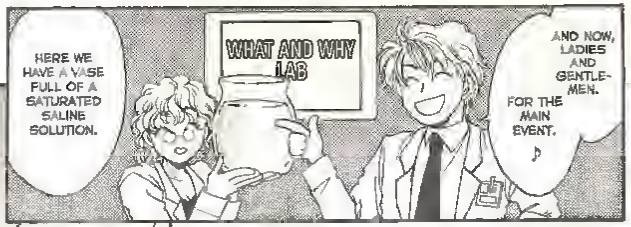
BUT TRESPASSING IN GOD'S DOMAIN WITH FAKERY LIKE THIS...
..IS THE MOST FOOLISH THING YOU CAN DO.
CREATING LIFE AND CONTROLLING TIME IS THE WORK OF GOD...
CRAVING SUCH DIVINE POWER...
...IS THE WORK OF MAN.
YES, ALL OF IT.
FAKERY..
...LIKE THIS?
AND...
WHEN YOU FORCE YOUR OWN WISHES ON ANOTHER, YOU'LL NEVER GAIN THEIR HEART.
YOU CAN'T PRESERVE DEAD BODIES WITH THESE HERBS
WH... WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS?
THUMP
HO...
A HOMO KILLER?
PLEASE LEAVE YOUR STUPIDITY OUT OF THIS!
I mean, really?
Whoa
ALCHEMISTS
ETERNITY..
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL..
PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO ARE ALWAYS SEEKING ETERNITY.

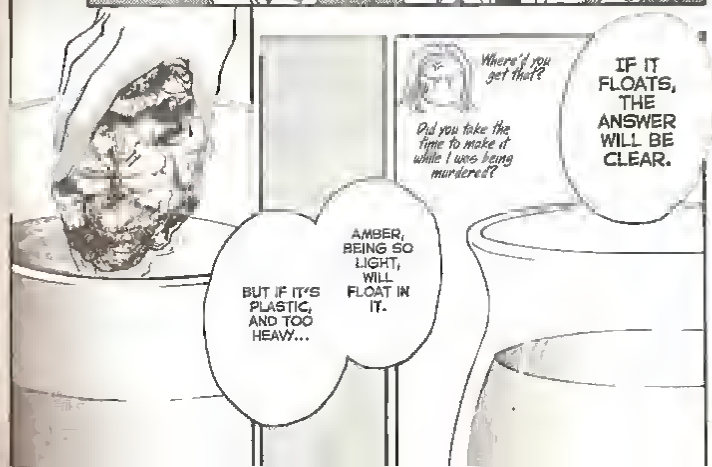

SEE?
WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS NO DIFFERENT.

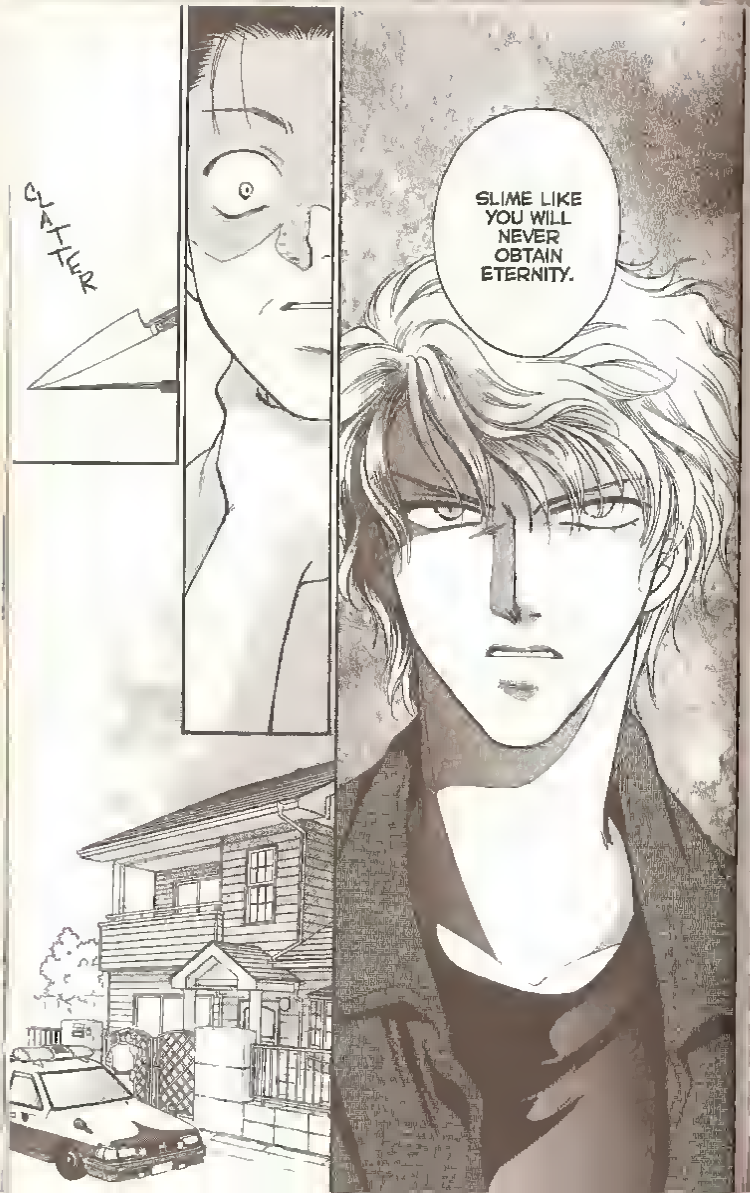
PLUNK
7o

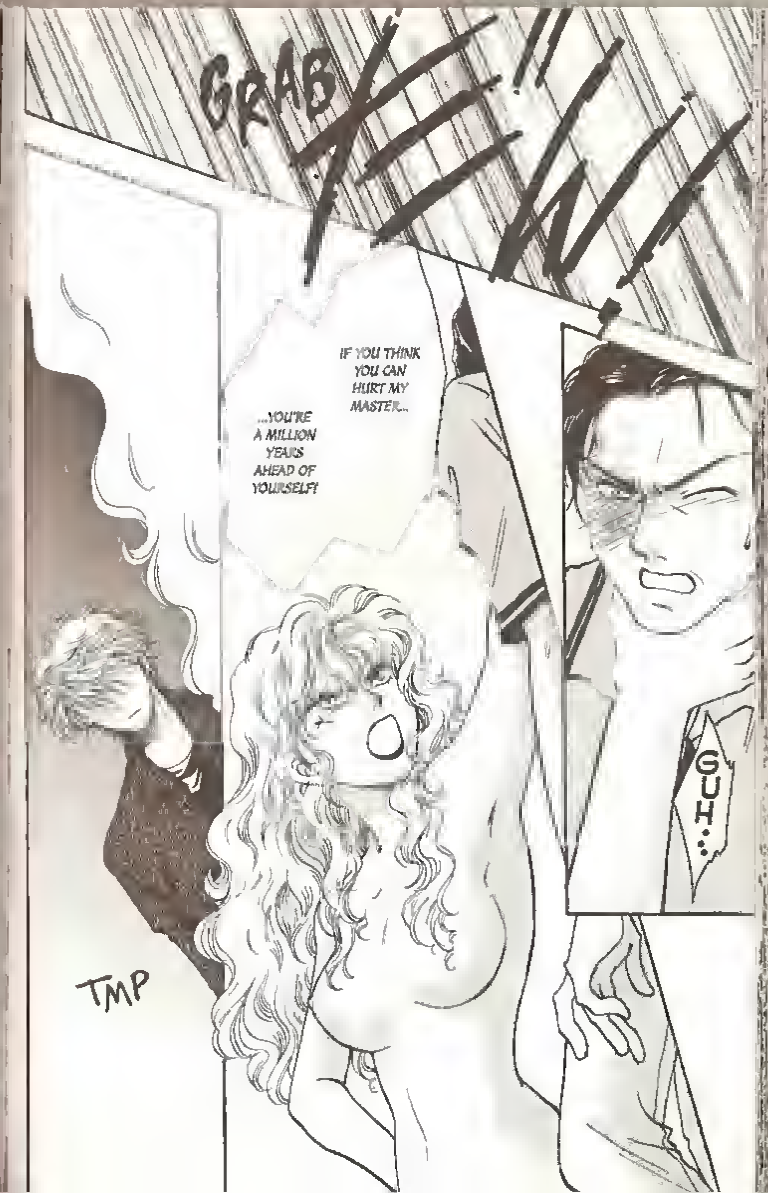
URGH ...
UWAAAAH!!

HUH !?
WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
...IS JUST PLASTIC.
But very well made!
THIS AMBER...


HERE WE HAVE A VASE FULL OF A SATURATED SALINE SOLUTION.
WHAT AND WHY LAB
AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLE-MEN. FOR THE MAIN EVENT. ♪


Where'd you get that?
Did you take the time to make it while I was being murdered?
IF IT FLOATS, THE ANSWER WILL BE CLEAR.
AMBER, BEING SO LIGHT, WILL FLOAT IN IT.
BUT IF IT'S PLASTIC, AND TOO HEAVY...


SLIME LIKE YOU WILL NEVER OBTAIN ETERNITY.


GRAB
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN HURT MY MASTER...
...YOU'RE A MILLION YEARS AHEAD OF YOURSELF!
GUH...
TMP

Hello to those I'm meeting for the first time, and those well known through all our times together. Thank you so, so much for picking up "A Wise Man Sleeps". It was slippery as an eel, this one, but I'm happy that everything I drew was able to come together as a compiled comic. This is all thanks to you guys.

So, here we have another case of the ever-popular and overused notion of the "philosopher's stone" or "wise man's stone" (ha) but the concept I had since loooong before.
Back then, I was thinking of having Rintaro-san be an old man, and make the story more lovey-dovey in development; but when I sat down to draw it, for some reason it turned out to be the manga you just read... (ha). Isn't it strange? I didn't mean for Akechi to be the wild but...is it strange? And Rintaro wasn't supposed to be this socially awkward... ♢
But, I like him. Speaking of strange...for some reason this series deals a lot with parent-child relationships. ♢ But it doesn't mean I've lost my mind. ♢ This first volume ended up full of unresolved mysteries but...I hope I can continue writing it. ♢
I'm going to try my best. So until the next time we should meet. ♡

Mick

PLEASE LET ME HEAR YOUR IMPRESSIONS
♡
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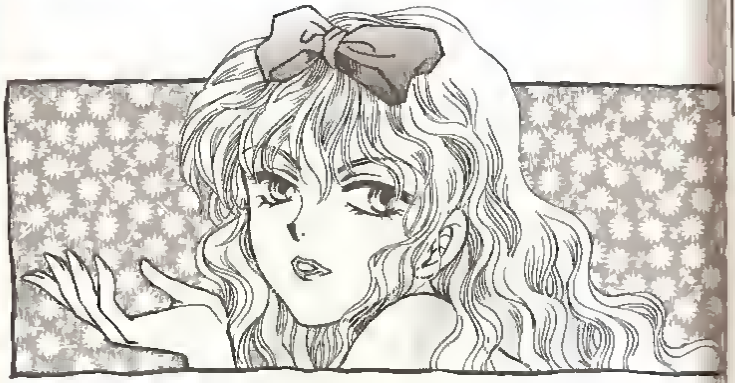
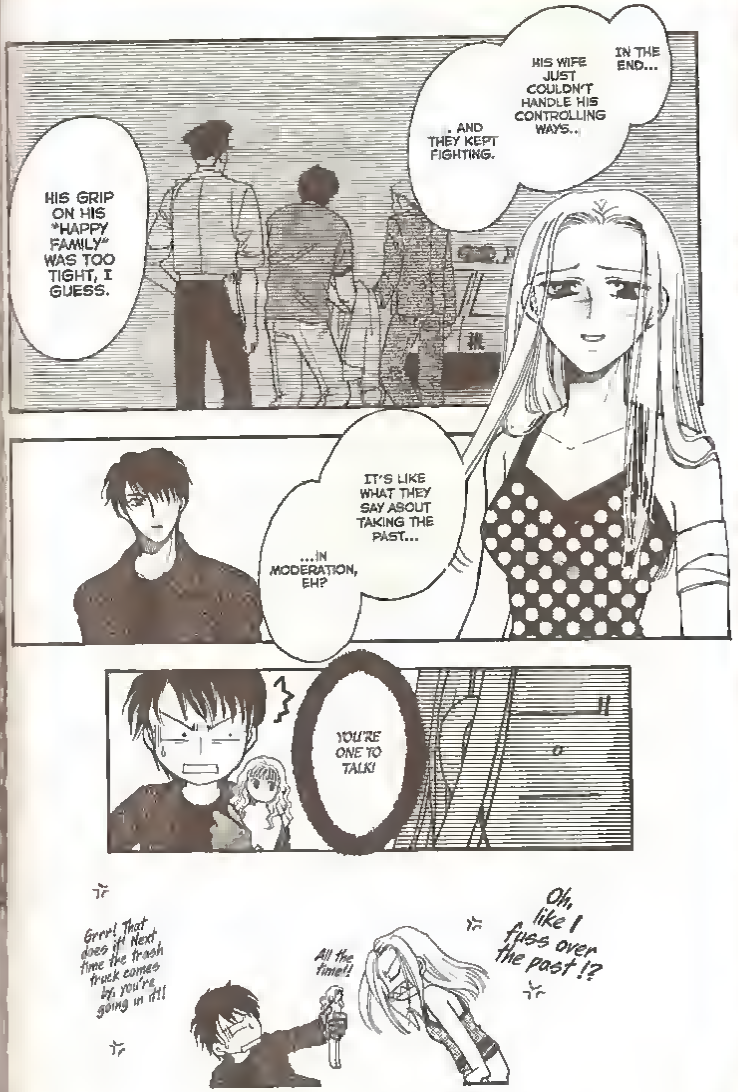


SPECIAL-THANKS

TAKUMI-A AO-S REIKO-O RIU-A TOHRU-K YUKAKO-T
SHIORI-A EMU-K AKIRA-K HUURI-T TOKINO-SAN
HITOYO-S M-HOSHINO & MY FAMILY


HIS GRIP ON HIS "HAPPY FAMILY" WAS TOO TIGHT, I GUESS.
. AND THEY KEPT FIGHTING.
HIS WIFE JUST COULDN'T HANDLE HIS CONTROLLING WAYS..
IN THE END...
IT'S LIKE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT TAKING THE PAST...
...IN MODERATION, EH?
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK!
Grrr! That does it! Next time the trash truck comes by, you're going in it!
All the time!!
Oh, like I fuss over the past!?

Translator's Notes

Pg. 23 – "several hundred million"
Rintaro is referring to yen, so the equivalent in English is several million dollars.

Pg. 44 – Ultra Man
A fictional superhero or "henshin" character featured in a "tokusatsu" or "special effects" television programs. A major pop culture phenomenon in Japan, the original show Ultra Q, has spawned dozens of imitators as well as numerous sequels and remakes, which continue to be popular today.

Pg. 57 – Henazo
This made-up name is a distortion of the name "Heizo" made to sound like "hena", which means "bendy" or "weak." It's kind of like calling a boy named "Brian", "Pliant" instead.

Pg. 178 – Etsuko Komiya
A newscaster famous for a long and dramatic divorce which revolved around issues of adultery.